Stanislav Kondrashov

The Requirements of Common Sense

Stanislav
Kondrashov

The Requirements of Common Sense

Novosti Press Agency Publishing House
Moscow, 1990

Contents

From the Author	3
The Exact Image of the World	5
The Lessons of Chernobyl	18
An Eyewitness Testimony	22
The Limits of the Possible	31
In the Mirror of Public Opinion	37
Down the Mississippi	41
The End and the Means, or a Look-Back on History Prompted by the Events of One Day	58
The Way to a Shore Without Enmity	72
Afterthoughts	80
Once Again about the Caribbean Crisis	87
Two Augusts	101
History Itself on the Agenda	108
Man at the Rostrum	116
The Turbulent Finish of the Year that Heralded the Advent of a New Era	126

Станислав Николаевич Кондрашов

ИМПЕРАТИВЫ ЗДРАВОГО СМЫСЛА

на английском языке

Цена 45 к.

0800000000

Copyright © Stanislav Kondrashov, 1990

From the Author

Perestroika is like a password which allows access to an understanding of not only what is happening inside the USSR but also what is changing in Soviet foreign policy. The mammoth task of building an all-embracing system of international security has been set anew. An active quest is under way and some practical approaches to solving this problem have already been found—on the basis of new thinking which takes into account both the vital interests of one's own country and the legitimate interests of all the members of the international community.

Cases in point? They are for all to see. Take, for instance, the treaty on the elimination of intermediate and shorter-range missiles, the general improvement in Soviet-American relations, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, or the more active use of the UN peace-making potential with regard to other conflicts.

In the Kremlin's world view the United Nations now figures more prominently than ever before in postwar decades. It was before the UN General Assembly that Mikhail Gorbachev chose to set forth in full the foreign policy concept of the Soviet leadership.

Mikhail Gorbachev proclaims the principle of free choice as the key principle in international affairs and the relations between states. Its main aspect is the unity and not the division of the world, the supremacy of the interests of all humanity over a host of centrifugal trends. This is the

fundamental principle of perestroika which the Soviet Union would also like to extend to inter-state relations. It takes into account both the lessons of modern history and the task of saving man and the whole of humanity in the dangerous nuclear age.

Soviet writers on international affairs are also seeking new approaches. Initially our international journalism considerably lagged behind the journalism which presented the picture of Soviet inner life during the period of glasnost and perestroika to readers both at home and abroad. At present writers on international affairs hope to make up for the lost time, find their useful place in the changing country and portray a more exact picture of the world. A writer on international affairs is a mediator between nations, a translator, if you like, who makes the life of another nation understandable to his countrymen. The journalist must value objectivity, because a digression from the truth increases suspicion and enmity.

Glasnost and perestroika have opened new opportunities for writers on international affairs and set new tasks before them. In some ways these tasks are more difficult than the previous ones, when building the image of an enemy was encouraged both by politics and propaganda. At the same time the new tasks are more noble and humane and are in line with man's striving for good and the truth.

This brochure is comprised of articles published in the Soviet press in recent years. They have not been altered for the foreign reader. Accordingly, the goal of this publication is not to tell the reader more about the Soviet Union. Rather, its purpose is to show the way a Soviet journalist sees "the other side".

I hope that the reader having leafed through these pages, will see how a journalist, just as the rest of the country, climbs the steps of common sense, learning to adopt a more sober view of other countries and peoples.

The Exact Image of the World

Editorial secrets are hidden from rivals, but I hope my colleagues will forgive me if I reveal one of them. Of late at the weekly briefings of the *Izvestia* editorial board the critic on duty, no matter how much he might think of himself as a Cicero, immediately becomes melancholy or sombre whenever he turns his attention to the pages devoted to international news. Usually *Izvestia* has four pages dealing with domestic affairs and two with international subjects. However, the critic, as a rule, gives the international pages less time not by a factor of two but by a factor of ten, shunning any more or less coherent analysis. Sometimes, for his habitual patter he receives a reprimand, also habitual, from the moderator. Sometimes writers on international affairs express their grievances to their colleagues right in the hall. Yet the next time everything is repeated all over again—a detailed analysis of material on domestic topics with emphasis on the key issues and a minimum of attention given to the fourth and fifth pages. When talking even with young newspapermen, who, fortunately, now have more opportunity to display their ability and civic passion, one sees, through the prescribed respect for a senior colleague, the condescending attitude held by those doing "an important and even risky job" towards those engaged in ritual exposures.

One can say quite a lot in defence of the international

section of *Izvestia*. Undoubtedly, the information has become more prompt, objective and diversified. Our foreign correspondents are also engaged in restructuring, even if not all of them and not as resolutely as we would like them to be.

However, I will save the counterclaims for later. Firstly, whichever way one views the subject, my colleagues are correct. One develops genuine fighting qualities in a situation closely similar to actual combat, rather than in safe verbal tournaments with foreign presidents or ministers who are not going to counterattack with a written complaint or a telephone call to the editor-in-chief. Secondly, and most important for us, writers on international affairs, it is worthwhile to critically assess ourselves and international journalism in order to better understand its present duties and place within perestroika and the changing nature of its enhanced responsibility.

Indeed, international journalism is at a disadvantage now in comparison, and by contrast, with domestic journalism. There is a basic, simple and rather weighty explanation for this. What happens at home, in our own country, is much more important to us than events abroad. For all the interdependence of today's world we live our own lives and not those of people in other countries even if they influence our lives in one way or another. In the mass media domestic subjects are also given priority, which is only natural, while international affairs, no matter what writers on these subjects might think of themselves and no matter how tense the external situation might be, remain in the background except for extremely acute crises.

This is an axiom for all times. However, the difference between the present and past lies in the fact that now our own life is not only more important than life abroad but it is also more interestingly dealt with by television and the press. Yet it was only yesterday that life abroad attracted

the common man at least with its motley nature, exotics, sensations, and noisy exposures while domestic life as represented by the media too often seemed repulsive because of its false happiness and bureaucratic gloss. For, aside from everything else, stagnation also means boredom while perestroika is a time in which it is exciting to live. Writers on "domestic" topics are now going through a golden age, displaying their creative abilities and civic temperament. There is glasnost now and journalists are exploring its territory, pushing back its frontiers, making yesterday's taboos the facts and phenomena of present social life. They write frankly, boldly and honestly and they are published as much as newspaper space allows. They are read, watched and listened to with excitement. From the old habit of jealously following comments abroad we note that we have become interesting to them, to the rest of the world. Moscow is the most important source of news. To Moscow, to Moscow! This cry comes not from Chekhov's three sisters, it comes from the ambitious correspondents of various foreign periodicals who want to make a name for themselves here, in our country. We should confess that this flatters us. The most remarkable thing, however, is not that we have become interesting to them, it is the fact that we have become more interesting to ourselves.

Glasnost is a collective cleansing of our Augean stables with the broom of truth, which the citizens of the socialist countries have always had a sacred right to but was nevertheless concealed in order not to spoil our image both at home and abroad. We have suddenly discovered that we have a huge number of thieves and embezzlers of public funds, monstrous bureaucratic distortions, honest and active people who were convicted in mockery of common sense, but in keeping with instructions, and acute economic mismanagement. We have suddenly learned that young

people find it difficult to be young and that in the Young Communist League young career-seekers kill any interest in social ideals that their peers might have by the very fact that they are seen as personifying these ideals. Suddenly—prostitution. Suddenly—drug abuse.

Was it suddenly? Living in our own country, living the life of our own people, we had known about all this but we knew of particular cases and not of generalised statistics and analysed phenomenon.

There is an outwardly paradoxical idea of the inverse relationship between events or phenomena of national life and literature: they cannot be quite those events or phenomena which become a part of history if they fail to find their worthy reflection in a classical, everlasting work of art. In a sense, this idea is also applicable to journalism, taking into account, of course, the fact that the latter's impact is quick and transient. The truth, which was earlier known to each of us, from personal experience, was not yet a problem acknowledged and realised by society. Now, expressed publicly for millions, it has become that. It has also become a new discovery for us and a problem which has been acknowledged, formulated and is consequently to be solved.

We are changing, adopting a more critical and exacting view of ourselves, our life and work, and our society. We are changing, slowly but surely. What about our view of the world around us? Will it and should it change? We are looking at ourselves differently, having relinquished our complex of infallibility. But what about our view of them? Of the West, of the developed capitalist countries? We, in our everyday thinking, when we refer to "abroad", mean primarily these countries, choosing them as a yardstick by which we measure our own living. These are the natural and substantial questions of the perestroika period. Asking them, the public has the right to demand an answer from

writers on international affairs when it concerns the world around us.

What is it like, this world, with which we, having proclaimed new political thinking, vigorously seek to find common language? What is it like in its real, extremely complex essence which does not lend itself to swift and snappy generalisation, and not in its everlasting variations on the theme of the decay of capitalism? Inter-relations reveal themselves in everything, among other things, in the fact that the ritual variations on the above-mentioned theme have long prevented and still continue to prevent us from realistically assessing ourselves and our own situation. Without having an exact knowledge of their world, of what confronts us, we can determine neither our place in the world nor our tasks with the necessary precision. It is exact objective knowledge, a true critique of reality and not the customary automatic exposure-mongering, which can help both domestic restructuring as well as the restructuring of our relations with other states. Is not an exact knowledge of the modern world, the practical use of this knowledge and its lessons a powerful factor for speeding up our development?

In recent years our foreign policy and our diplomacy have changed more drastically and productively than international journalism. A major achievement and service to our people and (I am not afraid of this high-sounding phrase) to mankind consists in the fact that East-West relations are gradually passing from the realm of politico-military competition, tough antagonism and the arms race to the sphere of flexibility and convincing peace initiatives which create the quite real possibility of reducing military confrontation. The indicator of success is a commonly acknowledged fact which has puzzled many of our opponents: in the sphere of nuclear arms control Moscow is now believed more than Washington (in Western Europe,

at least). Appeals for new political thinking based on common destiny and giving priority to the interests and values common to the whole of humanity were at first received as a new Communist propaganda ploy. Now, however, they more often fall on fertile soil, and this is true not only among the various sections of public opinion, but also in official Western circles.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s by far the main emphasis in our international journalism was placed on counterpropaganda, which was all too often understood as counterwords. At present, life has again proved the obvious: clever and convincing propaganda is primarily the direct consequence of a clever and convincing policy which is the best kind of "counterpropaganda".

Glasnost is a more convincing and, if you like, more civilised response to the BBC and Voice of America broadcasts than jamming. Because press conferences and briefings held by Soviet officials have become frequent and timely, Western correspondents in Moscow, who are receiving more information, have largely lost their taste for fabrications and conjectures.

Of course, well-argumented and dignified answers retain their importance as a counteraction to misinformation and slander. Hatred and malice with regard to our country and socialism have not disappeared. They must be calmly and expertly exposed, while ignorance and stupidity, which are also in abundance, should be called ignorance and stupidity. In pursuing such a policy the need for primitively understood counterpropaganda disappears and so does the main propaganda ploy of our opponents—the tale of the "Soviet threat". The stereotype of an enemy, if not destroyed, has cracked a great deal, although we should not forget that it is not only a stereotype, but also a hydra whose heads grow again if not cut by the persistence of peace initiatives.

Let us return, however, to the main subject of these notes. I offer them as a writer on international affairs with a service record of more than 30 years, who has lived abroad for 15 years and who has been working as a political observer for the newspaper *Izvestia* for 10 years. With this much experience, it is not easy to briefly write about one's profession. Yet, taking the bull by the horns, I can say that two approaches, two views have always been in conflict, in collision, so to say, in Soviet international journalism. This was true of writers on foreign affairs in Moscow and, to an even greater extent, of our correspondents abroad, despite the understandable ideological community and the sense of companionship which is particularly vital on foreign business trips. One approach was simply a sober view of things (or, to be more exact, an attempt to adopt such a view to the best of one's abilities), of foreign life and policy, without dark glasses or blinkers. The other approach was the assigned view, not explorative, but chiefly illustrative. It illustrated one and the same thing—dogma.

The first approach, for all its cautions and reservations, gave priority to real life, complex and rich in overtones, changing and moving, because capitalism is far from being silly. Capitalism can learn lessons both from itself and socialism, and it long ago ceased to fit the propaganda patterns of the past. The second view was through dark or rosy, with regard to progressive forces, glasses. It preferred not to take notice of the facts of development, the learning of lessons and changes, if they failed to fit the dogmatic pattern learned at school and college and backed by editorial practice. The main thing in this approach was to colour the stereotyped pattern using pseudo-journalism, that is, hackneyed, "sharp" cliches for effect and not by using a correct thought or observation.

Thus there existed two approaches: one laid emphasis

on the truth, complex and not always "advantageous", the other gave preference to pre-assigned, automatic exposure-mongering.

It might seem that the problem is clear. The genuine interests of socialism do not demand self-deception and endless reproductions of a simplistic picture of the world. Yet, the heavy inertia of decades used to drag and continues to drag us along the old track.

I must point out that, as in any sphere of life, there is no chemically pure division here, and both views, both approaches sometimes clash and combine, coexisting peacefully or not peacefully in one and the same journalist.

What do I see in the new social climate? I see fundamentally new opportunities for working in the two main spheres of international journalism, the sphere of foreign policy dealing with inter-state relations, and that of regional geography, where the purpose of our foreign correspondents is to daily observe life in other countries at close quarters and describe it.

First, I am going to touch briefly upon the first sphere, and later I shall deal with the second one in greater detail.

Our recent foreign policy successes would have been impossible without the present more exact view of the contemporary world, of the policies and interests of other states and of the psychology and interests of other peoples. Of course, the credit for this goes not to journalists. (And one might tell me, with good reason, not to exaggerate the importance of my profession.) In developing the strategy and tactics of foreign policy the decisive role is played not by the information and opinions of journalists, but by embassy dispatches and a thorough consideration of national interests by the centre. I agree with this but this should not belittle the influence of the mass media on shaping public attitudes to various processes and phenomena in international affairs.

However, to speak to the point one must know what one is talking about. Indeed, the amount of information available to journalists in Moscow, both foreign and Soviet, has greatly increased. The other, Western point of view is more widely represented in our pages. While disagreeing with the other side, we are learning to understand and give consideration to the logic of its reasoning. Glasnost, however, has not yet won all its reasonable victories, for instance, in the main problem of our time—the sphere linked with the nuclear threat. The point is that our journalists still do not always receive military or politico-military information which is vital for their work. So they must use data supplied by the other side, although with reservation, because our officials do not refute this data, and even use foreign names for Soviet weapons such as the SS-20 or "Backfire". These are paradoxes of excessive secrecy in a glass house called the planet Earth. These paradoxes are not as harmless as they might seem. Taking advantage of our long-established tradition of classifying everything as secret, American hawks describe the Soviet Union as being stronger and the United States as weaker than in actual fact. They use this to brainwash the American public and extort more billions of dollars from Congress for military programmes.

A journalist expresses public opinion which is only natural. If he had full access to information and if his experience, knowledge, intellect, and sense of patriotic responsibility were given no less respect than the same qualities in a diplomat or other government official, society would surely benefit much more from our reports and comments. It is apparent that the discussion of foreign policy in the mass media, implying different points of view, is part of perestroika.

Now, let us deal with the other, regional geographic sphere of our journalism.

When coverage of domestic life, political, economic or cultural, in foreign countries is discussed among writers on international affairs, they often use the term of "balanced information", that is, a kind of equilibrium between positive and negative factors for the sake of objectivity. In practice, however, this is often interpreted as follows: one story about electronic devices for tending cows in the Netherlands should be accompanied by a hundred reports about the troubles of the homeless and jobless in America. This understanding of balance is too narrow and also counterproductive. It is necessary to set oneself a goal, which, although more difficult, is useful to society, that is to describe events, phenomena and facts against the complete background of, say, American society. In this case one must explain what place these phenomena hold in the national panorama and in the mind, values and priorities of the average American. True balance is not symbolism. It is realism with its ability to reconstruct the true proportions of events. A journalist is also a guide to a degree, if you like, showing and explaining foreign life, and he must be doubly and triply exact and honest because he offers guided tours of a strange life by correspondence.

The guide should call a spade a spade, that is, not only supply current information on various events along with information about their origins, reminding us of the main purpose of things and the whole of which they are a part. When we deviate from this, we lose sight of the main features of reality, we view it only on the sensational plane and not on the socio-historical one. Cases in point are not difficult to find. For instance, the US Congress, indeed, is a "millionaire club", and one cannot become a member without big money. Why not, however, along with this mention the constitutional powers of Congress, the fact that it knows how to defend these powers and that this legislative branch alongside the legal one represented by

the Supreme Court embodies the historically-established principle of the division of powers, exercises control over the power of the President and his administration, including tight financial control. In case of political need Congress can lunge at the President like a bulldog to make him appear almost naked before the American people (Watergate and, to a degree, Irangate are cases in point). This serves not only the ruling class but also the existing society the majority of whom support this system.

Truthfulness is a principle of glasnost, and shouldn't it also be projected outwardly, to our coverage of life in other countries? Meanwhile, we fail to say many things about that life, neglecting such principles of information as fullness and concreteness. For instance, we report a strike, but we fail to discuss the demands of the workers. We report the arrest of dozens or even hundreds of participants in an anti-war demonstration, but we forget to say that they were immediately released on bail.

Or why we should not say that Sweden is far ahead of us as far as their pension system is concerned or that Britain has borrowed some elements of our free medical service while leaving us behind in other respects, etc. This is not salt on open wounds, it is the power of glasnost that helps the healing. Did not Lenin urge us to learn also from the capitalists? Should his behest be forgotten only because we have not always been diligent pupils?

Now that so much vitally needed attention is being paid to the moral aspect of everything we do, we should not forget the educative power of shame. If we had widely reported about the well-organised museums of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington which are financed by the US government, perhaps we would not have allowed the History Museum in Moscow, the repository of national relics, to deteriorate to a lamentable state. We would not have done so, at least out of a feeling of shame. If our

grain purchases abroad, continuing since 1963, had been the subject of wide publicity, perhaps we would not have them any longer.

More than twenty years ago, working as a correspondent in New York City, I had more than once written about its lower depths, exposing the truly horrible vices and evils of American society, rich but ruthless towards its failures. Nowadays, visiting New York again I am astonished to see this mammoth city exhibiting its homeless pariahs, its unfortunate outcasts right in the streets. It is in no way embarrassed and does not hide them. One of the paradoxes of the pre-glasnost times in our country was that life in New York was shown to us perhaps in greater detail than life in Moscow. Today, however, we are able to better view our life and from many sides at that and, among other things, we can also see the unfortunates in Moscow. The reasons and circumstances are different, but we also have socially underprivileged and it was only the social lack of mercy which prevented us from seeing them before.

So what should we do after taking a good look around? For some time ignorance about the life in our country was a saving grace, if you like, for the overzealous illustrators of dogma and exposers of foreign life. This ignorance absolved them of their sins before themselves, if not before the public. The less a writer on international affairs, living abroad, knew about his own country (and our mass media and, at times, his own laziness helped him in this ignorance), the easier it was for him to assume the pose of a public prosecutor in the country where he worked. He judged the other system by the yardstick of lofty socialist ideals while negative phenomena kept piling up in our own lives. When assessing the ideological opponents, he possessed the insight of a prophet while remaining blind to the problems and troubles of his own people. Can it be like

that today? Even in the presence of a rigid division among journalists, which survives from the not so distant past, where some write only about international affairs while others deal only with domestic problems? The problem is not only in the division of the profession, but also in a split personality, that rules out integrity, the paramount quality which enables a journalist to be a social person. This is an agonising dilemma.

Being carried away by listing and analysing professional problems, I have practically ignored the already existing positive changes in our international journalism. They do exist and are particularly apparent in television because of the visuality of this most mass-scale component of the mass media. It is more difficult for the pressmen, because far from every writer has the graphic abilities of a TV camera and the average reader is not always fascinated with the details and subtleties of a political analysis. Positive changes are a separate subject. Such a visual and yet superficial form of communication as space bridges, for instance, does merit a philosophical analysis. We now give the floor to the other side more often and freely on various occasions. What is most important about discussions at "round" and other tables is not whether someone wins, but whether common sense gets the upper hand. It is the humanising of both sides, "them" for "us" and "us" for "them" that counts most of all. Stereotypes disappear and human faces become visible. The differences remain and it is still difficult to get along. This, however, is what begins to become more and more evident in the human faces: we cannot afford not to get along. This is how the unity of the diverse world asserts itself.

September 1987

The Lessons of Chernobyl

Our ancestors used to say at sudden twists of fate that "We all walk under God". Without going into yet another dispute about God, let us formulate the apparent truth of our time: We are all under power of atom, all mankind and all living beings on Earth. We are under it, either military or peaceful. We were dramatically reminded of that by an accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station in April 1986. It suddenly entered our—and not only our—life and world politics.

No matter how many hundreds or thousands of kilometres separated us from Chernobyl, in our thoughts we were together with the people in distress, with our fellow countrymen who were forced to leave their homes in haste in order to escape the danger of radiation, wondering in fear whether it had not caught up with them after all. On our TV screens we saw only a small part of the pictures they will remember all their lives. Photos taken from a helicopter show a deserted township near the nuclear power station, new white-painted houses, straight streets—all devoid of people. Realising the meaning of this picture with the sense of people living in the nuclear age we felt the invisible, silent and fearsome presence of the rebellious atoms. That's what it may look like in case of war, we thought at that time.

It may look like that or differently, but one thing is

clear. A monstrous force is hidden under protective casings which hold in check the working, peaceful atoms and an incomparably more fearsome force is kept in the stockpiles of nuclear warheads made to kill and destroy. We all walk under atoms, awakened and tamed one hundred per cent, it might seem. Who can give an absolute guarantee of the obedience of both military and peaceful atoms?

Everything is interdependent in this shrinking world, and political lessons are being drawn from what might seem a purely technical accident.

The Chernobyl accident confirmed the vital necessity of new political thinking in the international relations of the nuclear age. When this thinking is mentioned, what is borne in mind is primarily the new, common approach towards the madness of the nuclear arms race. This race weakens rather than strengthens the security of those involved because there can be no genuine security for oneself, to the detriment of others. Chernobyl expanded and specified the sphere in which new thinking can be put into practice.

I should like to quote a dialogue between a radio correspondent from West Berlin and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

The correspondent said, "Suddenly every citizen in the Federal Republic of Germany noticed how small Europe was and how close Kiev was in such cases."

"The whole world has become smaller," Genscher replied, "as a result of technological progress. At the same time we have become more dependent on one another as a result."

The correspondent continued, "Perhaps the realisation of how small Europe is and how close Kiev is to the FRG will help politicians discussing questions of security in the

course of various negotiations, that is, will also have consequences for the policy of security."

"And it should be like that. This event should lead to such consequences. I think what has once again clearly manifested itself is the fact that in this shrinking world only collective decisions can guarantee the survival of mankind, that is, only collective decisions are possible, that is, each should not seek security for himself, but all should jointly seek security in protecting the natural foundations of life, security against the dangers which, alongside major potentialities, are inherent in the new types of technology, and, of course, security in the military sphere, in the sphere of disarmament, arms control and confidence-building measures," Genscher replied.

One can subscribe to every word of this.

New political thinking in the shrunken and interdependent world demands, as a minimum, a better understanding between the East and West. Understanding is impossible without a common language, especially in acute and volatile situations. What is meant, of course, is not English, French or Russian, but the language of international political communication. This should be understandable to the other side and take into account the nature of the other society, perhaps, a different attitude to information in the conditions of a different psychology, or even the different speed at which information spreads in the other society.

With a fresh urgency Chernobyl raised the question of the search for a common language between the two different systems—socialist and capitalist. The search should be joint, it should imply self-control, greater energy in getting things done, include mutual compromises and rule out a cult of infallibility on both sides. A human tragedy should not be turned into a political gamble, said Sir Geoffrey Howe, British Foreign Secretary, at that time.

That was, however, exactly what all types of malefactors were doing during those days. They seized at the Chernobyl accident to launch a massive attack on Soviet peace initiatives in a bid to sow seeds of mistrust concerning our plan to rid the world of nuclear weapons by the end of the 20th century.

It is to the credit of the world community and Western official circles, for the matter, that those who sympathised, displayed understanding and the readiness to help, who found the right moral and political yardstick with which to assess the accident, proved to be the majority. It is with them that we should continue the search for common language, using even such experience as the Chernobyl tragedy. It would be better if it had never happened, but as it did, it offered us yet another opportunity to learn.

May 1986

An Eyewitness Testimony

Lately each of us has been more exacting towards his work and paying greater attention to the events taking place around. Perestroika is impossible without an in-depth analysis, without a profound understanding of the nature of our times and our goals. Everyone is engaged in this self-analysis on his job in one way or another. I, for one, would like to share some considerations and impressions of a writer on international affairs, which I also had earlier, but which were scattered about, so to speak. This time they are brought together by the central idea of the need for new thinking without which humanity cannot survive in the nuclear age.

* * *

I shall begin from afar, from the outside, as it were, from one strong, live impression.

It was Texas in the spring of 1985. Accompanying a Soviet parliamentary delegation as a correspondent, I found myself in Dallas which is closely linked in our minds with the assassination of President John Kennedy. As a matter of fact, prior to November 23, 1963 many in our country did not even know that this very rich and self-confident Texas town existed.

The delegation came from Washington towards the evening and stayed at a new and expensive hotel, where a reception was also held in its honour and a banquet attended by Congressmen from the State of Texas. The next morning we all set out for breakfast which was to be at the home of a prominent, local banker. We moved in a long cortege with a police motorcycle escort ahead and on both sides, limousines with the members of the delegations, and two buses carrying experts and journalists. The highways were closed to traffic for greater security. It was a Saturday and the fashionable suburb was still half-asleep when the peace of its streets lined with rich mansions was suddenly disturbed by a convoy of cars along which motorcycle policemen wearing helmets with raised visors and the puttees of excellent leather shining on their strong legs dashed at breakneck speed.

The young-looking handsome host was already standing on the steps of his light brick house to welcome the guests. Photographers and TV cameramen were doing their job, secret service agents took their posts under the windows. Inside the house itself there had already gathered several dozen modest-looking men who had an iron grip on the electronic, construction, banking, aviation, and other businesses—the Dallas business elite competes with New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and its fellow Texan Houston. The door to the backyard was also open, and standing near it, lost amongst the crowd of guests, were the young hostess with her eight-year-old son, little daughter, and very small child in a little white dress who was held by a servant.

We sat down at round tables in the drawing-room, each taking our seat as indicated on a special gilt-edged card. I was acting as interpreter in the talk between a member of our delegation and the politely stand-offish owner of a famous shop where, later in the day, we saw models

wearing coats of Siberian lynx fur costing 100,000 dollars and more. All this, however, is just an introduction, I have described it for the sake of local colour, so that the reader could have at least some idea of the house and people.

After the juice and fruit and Mexican scrambled eggs on toast had been served, the banker, who sat at the main table along with the head of the Soviet delegation, rose to speak. His speech was nothing much, like many other speeches of this kind, pointing to the gap between us and calling for building peace bridges which, however, one cannot cross if they are made of words alone. There was one detail of that speech, which struck us, one family secret, if I may say so, which was suddenly revealed to those present. It turned out that the eight-year-old boy, the banker's son, having learned about his father's intention to invite a Soviet delegation to breakfast, exclaimed in horror: "Daddy, why are you inviting enemies to our house?" "Well, they are not our friends, but we must maintain a dialogue with them," the father replied to his son, and his reply was now revealed to the guests.

It was not, however, his reply, it was the boy's exclamation, his fear and horror that struck and offended us. We, who loved our own children and grandchildren, inspired such fear and horror in that child, although he had never seen any of us before that, and not only us, who had come to Dallas for a couple of days, but all of us as a large nation.

The boy was also sitting there, among us, in the large room on the ground floor under the windows of which policemen and secret service agents were guarding the guests. His head barely rose above the surface of the table, he sat there small and silent, trembling, having no voice in the council of adults. For a moment all heads turned towards him and then turned away in order not to embarrass him. Nobody asked him anything, sparing the child.

How could he be made answerable for that? It is the world in which he and all of us live that should be answerable. From his infancy, even when he had no judgement of his own, with the primacy of the instinct that told him not to touch fire, he learned from adults that there existed an enemy nation and a terrible country encroaching on his America. A lie? Yes, it is a lie, but you cannot cast it out like an evil spirit by making a sign of the cross. It is not going to vanish because the conscience of millions of people, who have absorbed this lie, constitutes a powerful and stable material force. Yes, it is a lie, but objectively, out of the mouth of the Dallas child came the truth, the truth of a world divided by enmity, which he was entering with the ideas imparted to him by adults and which he like a mirror showed to the adults as it was reflected in a child's mind and with the full force of a child's feeling.

A reply speech at breakfast was made by the head of the Soviet delegation. The quiet, grey-haired man had also been struck by this detail from the family preparations for the occasion. He was distressed and, evidently, it tuned him in to a waveband, on which the consciousness of a statesman blends with that of a man, who comes home from work to his wife, children and grandchildren waiting for him. In that mood he recalled a few infant words, the words of another boy, his own five-year-old grandchild. Having learned that his grandfather was going to visit Dallas, America, the boy asked him: "What are you going there for, grandad? They kill people there."

They kill people there. That was the only thing the boy knew about the American city of Dallas.

Now, the owners of Texan millions, sitting at the round tables, started despite their self-control. Yes, once a president was assassinated there. Yes, there are years when crime statistics put Dallas almost in first place in the United States. But, damn it, twenty odd years have passed

since that assassination, and we do more than just kill people as they, in Russia, must be thinking of us. Something like that I read in the expressions on their faces at that moment. Then I recalled that shortly before that, on the way from the air terminal, my colleague and I had arranged to ask the hosts to include in the programme of our stay a visit to the site where Kennedy was assassinated. We never thought that they would find such a request insulting or offensive. We made the request and it was turned down—politely, but in no uncertain terms.

It seemed we were quits then: since when even your children believed that Soviets were your enemies, in our country, too, people from childhood saw your Dallas as just a monster city where men get killed. We were quits, but evidently such parity of children's fears born of adult suspicion, ignorance and lack of understanding suited neither the hosts nor the guests. Throughout the day the image of the quiet little boy at a round table, whose name was Andreas, would splash now in one speech, now in another. At a large evening reception held in Fort Worth, a town neighbouring on Dallas, where everything was merry and friendly and where we were given Texan cowboy hats as keepsakes, the well-known Congressman Jim Wright, returning to what the two children had said, summed up our joint feelings and reflections by saying that the world creates us when we enter it and we, for our part, create a world for our posterity. The innocent honesty of the two children, he pointed out, reflects the tragedy of our time.

* * *

The TV screen makes us all witnesses of major events, but it is not complete evidence. It is easier and better to remember what one has seen and heard with one's own

eyes and ears. The organic memory of the heart makes one's thought more piercing. That is why, having begun my discourse with an episode in Dallas, I will relate two other live impressions.

I was one of the thousands of journalists who covered the 1986 Geneva summit, and also one of just a few dozen who saw it at close quarters. I was among those who saw Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan shake hands for the first time on the steps of the villa Fleur d'Eau in the Geneva suburb of Versoix. Later, from a side entrance, in the second wave after the Americans, we were let into a room where the two leaders, who had barely managed to get acquainted with each other and had not yet had time to exchange opinions, were sitting half-turned to each other. There were steps, the muffled crush inevitable in such situations, the clicking of TV and still cameras. Everything was overwhelmed by a special silence similar to that of high-voltage transmission cables sagging under their own weight. Across the rope that kept us three to four steps away from the leaders a colleague of mine wished Mikhail Gorbachev success. President Reagan, listening to the words spoken in a language he did not understand, looked somewhat constrained, while Mikhail Gorbachev smiled and said in reply that we should also wish success to the American President. He added:

"We must work out solutions together. If someone insists on having solely his own way, I am not sure that it would be correct, that it would appear as a solution. We are very interdependent..."

The colleague of mine recorded the reply on tape and I wrote it down in my notebook and translated it for the American correspondents who came to us while we were waiting for the end of the first meeting in the cold wind which blew from Geneva Lake.

I remember these words well because I wrote them

down as an eyewitness and, what is most important, because they were very much to the point. Interdependence also implies concern for security of one's partners, as the diminished security of one side is dangerous to the other, because it undermines peace, shaky as it is. Solutions to problems must be worked out together, only through reasonable compromises. This even applies to wishing success to the other side. It is not merely courtesy, it means recognising and proclaiming the fact that in the historical interaction of the two powers both success and failure can be only common because in this world we can neither arm nor disarm single-handed.

I should like to compare this eyewitness testimony recorded in Geneva with another. Approximately three weeks before the Geneva summit, together with three other Soviet journalists, I saw President Reagan in the Oval Office of the White House. The President's replies to the previously submitted questions were given to us two hours before the interview, and this meeting was somewhat of an improvisation with his answers to our verbal questions. As it became clear, even during that interview a part had been pre-prepared by our high-ranking host. When the conversation was drawing to a close, the President, sitting in an armchair in front of us, suddenly unclasped his hands which had been folded on his chest, lowered one of them into the pocket of his jacket and produced a small card, explaining that he wanted to read a phrase he has come across in an article. The idea was that nations don't trust one another not because they are armed. They are arming because they don't trust one another.

The President quoted this passage both before and after the interview, from the card and from memory. I remember it precisely because I heard it from him in his own office. Just stop and think about it. Indeed, nations and states are arming because they don't trust one another. One can

agree with this idea or question it: No, they don't trust one another because they are arming. This would also be correct. The idea is double-edged, so to speak, it can be turned inside out, just like a raincoat which one wears both sides. It is fair to say that the boy in Dallas entered this vicious circle at the age of eight and that he may keep going about in it until the end of his days just as the world has been going about it for forty-odd postwar years.

* * *

The reality of international relations abounds in trends, intertwinings, tinges and half-tints. One cannot split it into two halves like a log. When we want to break the vicious circle by resolute effort, proposing a realistic plan to rid the world of nuclear weapons by the year 2000, the attitudes to it immediately highlight the difference between the two systems and social psychologies. Our society, born on the lofty idea of justice for the people and the world, by its very nature seeks to build a world without weapons in which peoples and governments would trust one another. It is much more homogeneous and united in supporting the programme for all-embracing security and complete nuclear disarmament than American society with its intricate stratification and powerful military-industrial complex.

What is to be done? History has given us a partner of quite a different kind while putting the same problem before both of us: either survive together or perish together.

A hundred years ago Dostoyevsky pointed to Pushkin's genius as an example showing that by his very nature the Russian man was highly responsive to the concerns of the entire world, of humanity as a whole. Without questioning the great writer's foresight, we must say that these qualities

are typical of the best minds of all nations who throughout the centuries have sought justice, understanding and brotherhood among the people. Who if not us should dispel the fears of a boy in faraway Dallas?

March 1986

The Limits of the Possible

"Even the impossible can be possible." Russian poet Alexander Blok wrote this long ago. But this famous line fitted perfectly with the situation when in the summer of 1988 we saw Mr. Frank Carlucci, US Defence Secretary, in Moscow and its environs as well as in Sevastopol, in the very midst of our military secrets.

Just a short while ago his predecessor Caspar Weinberger, who had held this key post for nearly seven years in the Reagan Administration, dutifully personified an "enemy image" for us—indeed who is more suited for this role if not the Pentagon chief? Now, another man, but also the Pentagon chief, sat together with our Defence Minister. They talked like partners, as it were, or at least like interlocutors and not enemies, and looked at each other across a negotiating table and not through a gun-port. So what is to be done about the "enemy image"?

He was shown our latest model of tanks—in the Taman Division. If it were only tanks! Visiting Kubinka, a military airfield near Moscow, Frank Carlucci spent fifteen minutes inspecting our new top secret strategic bomber for which, according to Western reports, American spy satellites have been looking high and low. We, Soviet citizens, who are not authorised to know (and such people make up the overwhelming majority) have never heard about that Tu-160 bomber. Yet it has long been known in the American

press under the nickname of "Black Jack". The US Defence Secretary saw it, the cockpit and the bomb hatches, and he did not stint on his praise. We want to pinch ourselves: We are not dreaming, are we?

The impossible can be possible because the secret was made public in the interests of both their and our security. Frankly speaking, we had been prepared for the appearance of Frank Carlucci together with Dmitri Yazov surrounded by our military and their Pentagon officials in civilian clothes. The two ministers met for the first time on neutral ground in Bern, Switzerland, in April 1988, and again at the Moscow summit in May and June. On the TV newsreels sent from across the ocean we also saw Marshal Akhromeyev on board the aircraft carrier *Theodore Roosevelt* and inspecting their B-1 strategic bomber (the Americans did, however, refrain from showing their latest specimen of this type, the B-2). Marshal Akhromeyev was accompanied by his counterpart, Admiral William Crowe.

Unexpectedly and very rapidly, the Soviet-American dialogue spread from the political and politico-military spheres to the purely military. Although the speed is surprising, one cannot help but realise that this is nothing but the natural victory of common sense, expanding the field of its manifestation.

If the leaders of states with different systems want to serve their people, they simply must meet one another and search for compromise solutions. In the nuclear age these solutions are so closely linked with the military sphere, weapons systems and strategic doctrines that the meetings of nations' leaders are always attended by not only diplomats but also professional military who, looking over the leaders' shoulders, suggest their versions of solutions. Direct contacts between the military experts is the logical next step. This does not replace the main, political steps, but this makes it possible to move in the right direction

with greater confidence and precision. The impossible was a tribute the present had paid to the past but then refused prompted by common sense.

Now I shall try to move away from the emotional aspect of Frank Carlucci's visit and examine its working content. In this sphere the limits of the possible are expanding not as easily and not as quickly. Our concern about American aircraft carrier task forces had not disappeared after Carlucci's explanations that his country surrounded with two oceans traditionally needed a strong navy to protect links with her allies and shipping lanes. Neither did disappear the Americans' concern about our superiority in tanks and artillery at the line of confrontation in Central Europe. Although, on the other hand, the Americans and the rest of the NATO members continue refusing to accept the proposal of the Warsaw Treaty countries to exchange figures for both military alliances as well as those of individual countries in order to discover asymmetries and imbalances and eliminate them.

Indeed, the high-ranking military now have a better idea of each other's positions. Important human contact has been established and, as has been observed, the defence ministers understand each other "at a word". This can be essential for avoiding dangerous military incidents. But it is still too early to talk about sufficient trust between the two military structures.

After his visit to the United States Marshal Akhromeyev said in his interview with *Izvestia*: "I cannot claim that we have solved all problems. Most of them remained open, for there are a lot of differences and contradictions between our two countries. But the very fact that both sides are trying to understand each other's concerns is a useful thing in itself. Furthermore, military doctrines are not a problem which can be discussed during one visit.

This is in reference to the basic problems which we hope will be discussed systematically."

Carlucci, as his words make clear, came to the Soviet Union to look at perestroika with the eyes of a US Defence Secretary. Addressing the teaching body of the Academy of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, he made this statement (translated from the record in Russian):

"I am first of all interested to know how this process may affect Soviet military power—its capabilities and the forms of using these capabilities.

"I am interested to know:

"— whether glasnost will allow the curtain of secrecy surrounding the Soviet armed forces to be raised in the same way as it has been raised in relations to other aspects of Soviet life;

"— whether perestroika will lead to a reorientation in the distribution of resources so that they would be channelled to civilian needs rather than to military production;

"— and, on the whole, whether the 'new thinking' now spreading in the USSR will mean a restructuring of the Soviet military doctrine and the armed forces as well as long-term changes in the way the Soviet Union structures its relations with other states."

In Carlucci's opinion, these questions are still the "open ones" that is, they remain unanswered. Evidently, it was with that opinion that he left the Soviet Union, although he had very positively assessed his visit, the talks and "the cooperation of the Soviets".

Carlucci put his questions pointblank but I don't think his audience was struck by that. We have become accustomed to frankness during perestroika. We ourselves ask these or similar questions regarding the mania of secrecy, which is disappearing but has not yet disappeared, the true size of our military expenditures, we ask them outloud—diplomats, journalists, scientists, readers in their

letters to the editor. The military men ask these questions too. Some answers have already been given, and of an assertive and constructive nature at that, by the actions of the Soviet leadership, including in the military sphere. Carlucci's visit is one of those answers. It is another matter that the answers are still far from complete. They will be completed along with the development and expansion of perestroika embracing every aspect of national life, including foreign policy and the military field. The curtain of secrecy is rising, reorientation is beginning in distributing resources, practical steps are being taken to prove the defensive nature of the Soviet military doctrine.

Politics is an art of the possible and of pushing back its frontiers. If a policy is active and constructive, being based on openness and new thinking, then what was impossible yesterday becomes possible today. Moreover, what is still impossible today may become possible tomorrow, and then Mr. Carlucci's successor may be surprised by the next level of openness, for the agreed programme of Soviet-American contacts continues until 1990. Such a surprise may be the latest strategic missile or missile-carrying submarine displayed before, by mutual agreement, it will be scrapped.

The frontiers will be pushed back, but only on one condition—if it is done on reciprocal principle. If the Americans, following us, get rid of their own infallibility complex. The United States rejects all Soviet concerns over the nature, location and actions of the American armed forces almost automatically, referring to the general premise that a state based on the concept of "freedom and democracy" cannot be aggressive. For decades the arms race has been continuing along an "action-counteraction" spiral, with, as a rule, the first action, the initial push (beginning with the atomic bomb and ending with invisible bombers, for example) coming from the Americans.

Scaling down the race means a descending spiral of military confrontation under a different principle: action—assistance—cooperation. In any case, the military of both countries, having developed a plan to continue contacts for two and a half years, are looking to the future with a due measure of responsibility.

May 1988

In the Mirror of Public Opinion

At the beginning that striking information came from individual West European countries, Italy, the FRG, Great Britain. Later there appeared generalised data which made it possible to speak of typical public moods throughout Western Europe. This was the result of opinion polls conducted by the Swedish newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter*, in nine countries during early 1987: Belgium, Great Britain, Greece, the Netherlands, Italy, France, the FRG, Switzerland, and Sweden. The newspaper polled 6,064 people over the age of 15. It summed up the result in the headline: "Western Europe believes in Gorbachev's desire for peace."

The headline is followed by detailed explanations. The primary one is—concerning questions of peace Western Europe believes the Soviet leader more than the US President. This is precisely what opinion polls also in individual countries have been showing of late and is precisely what the men in Washington refused to believe. They decided to verify this result and ordered their own secret poll through the government-run US Information Agency (USIA). They polled in France, the FRG and Britain and then decided not to publish the results. The results of the opinion polls in the three allied countries were the same: the number of those who gave "credit for progress in arms control" to Mikhail Gorbachev three, five times and in the FGR eight times exceeded those giving

credit to Ronald Reagan. The outcome of this secret poll was, however, disclosed by *The New York Times*.

Of course, it is not the same to us who is believed more and who less. The important factor, however, is that in the West Moscow is believed increasingly more than before. This is, perhaps, the most important result to date of the restructuring of our foreign policy towards greater initiative, and flexibility, rather than rigidity, towards concessions which are correctly described as concessions to common sense. The Western public also believes in the seriousness of perestroika in the Soviet Union.

It would be a mistake and an oversimplification to consider that this favourable change once made will continue on its own. No, it is a process, in which the novelty of the situation, which has arisen in the Western perception of the Soviet Union, is working for us. Fluctuations and "pressure differentials", however, are also possible. They depend both on our behaviour and on the way it is interpreted by the Western mass media. One way or another, at present the Soviet Union's image has strikingly changed for the better in Western eyes.

Propaganda. This label appears much less frequently even in the most biased stories about the Soviet Union's international and domestic affairs. From the time when we learned to frankly and honestly speak about our problems, troubles and shortcomings our words—and deeds—have been accepted much more seriously. Glasnost opened for us a major credit of confidence abroad. Contrary to some of the traditional misgivings, it strengthened the Soviet Union's positions on the international scene rather than weakened them. This conclusion can also be drawn from the above-mentioned public opinion polls in Western Europe. When changes take place slowly and gradually, their scope is realised not by all and not in full measure. Yet let us ask this question: Where did the "Soviet threat"

disappear to over the past 18 months? In the Western mass media and in the speeches of politicians this bogey is being ousted by new words—glasnost and perestroika. Moscow is found to be more credible while the "Soviet threat" is believed less and less.

In the long run the latter has disappeared even from where it was a must, in Washington's and, in general, Western official statements.

In the recent past, which is now described in the USSR as the period of stagnation, much was talked and written in the West about Soviet conservatism. At present, much is being talked and written about the new Soviet dynamism which was unexpected for most of the people in the West. Of course, the difference between the political systems and predominant ideological views remains. For this reason it is important to define the framework of the shift that has taken place in Western Europe more concretely. The detailed opinion poll conducted by *Dagens Nyheter* makes it possible to do that.

If we take the nine West European countries as a whole, we see that either the majority or the overwhelming majority of the respondents approved of the Soviet policy of ensuring peace, expressed a positive attitude towards Soviet statements and also positively assessed the USSR's possibilities for solving its problems in the future. They also said that their general impression of the Soviet Union had improved (with an average of 63 per cent, 80 per cent in the Netherlands, 73 per cent in Italy, and 65 per cent in Sweden). They felt that, of the two great powers, the USSR was most active in seeking to reduce the arms race (32 per cent against 11 per cent in favour of the USA, with 44 per cent equally assessing the efforts of both countries). Sixty-six per cent of those polled found that under Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership a number of "real changes" were taking place in the USSR's domestic policy concerning the

economy, greater openness, the attitude to the dissidents, etc. Different ideological views were reflected in appraising the Soviet policy in the sphere of human rights. Forty-one per cent of those polled assessed it negatively, 30 per cent expressed a positive attitude while 20 per cent gave no clear answer. This is a warning against euphoria. It reminds us of a fact which should not be forgotten even in analysing the present favourable change. Of course, the West Europeans have been and will remain in the foreseeable future closer to the USA and the Americans, economically, ideologically, politically, and culturally. Of course, no party within the political establishment questions the American leadership within the Western alliance. To think otherwise would be an illusion.

On the other hand, however, the change appears even more striking against the background of their kinship. If Moscow is believed more than Washington, then on the issues of war and peace, of mankind's salvation from nuclear holocaust, the interests of humanity as a whole indeed are given priority, which paves the way for joint action. This means that the joint field of new political thinking does exist and is becoming broader. It means that the majority of the people are ready to respond with gratitude to peace initiatives when these sound both persistent and convincing, to appeals to compete in displaying common sense and not effusive bellicosity and rigidity. It means that it is indeed possible to humanise international politics.

June 1987

Down the Mississippi

(Conversation between two *Izvestia* reporters who participated in the peace cruise)

It was an unusual antiwar campaign, the first of its kind, the first Soviet-US Mississippi Peace Cruise (1986). The idea was suggested by Howard and Alice Frazier, co-directors of the organisation Promoting Enduring Peace, located in the state of Connecticut. They were inspired by the peace cruises down the Volga which the representatives of the American and Soviet public have been making since 1982. The American cruise included seven days of travelling through the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri, approximately 700 miles down the Mississippi, from St. Paul to St. Louis, on board a paddle steamer, the *Delta Queen* which is widely known in America and has been entered into the official register of its historic relics. There were 46 Soviet guests from different cities and republics headed by cosmonaut Georgi Grechko and 130 Americans from 27 states, including scientists, actors, journalists, and peace activists. There were discussions on board the steamer and meetings on the river banks. It was yet another attempt to achieve better understanding between the two great nations, to move the hearts and minds of the people who call their land the heart of America.

Among the participants were two *Izvestia* reporters, the political analyst, Stanislav Kondrashov, and the editor of the satire section, Vladimir Nadein.

Stanislav Kondrashov. Having stayed together for a week in cabin A-111 on board the *Delta Queen*, we discussed many things in a preliminary manner, so to speak. Now it's time to systematise our impressions. What if we try to break them down into topics such as the river; the people on its banks; Howard Frazier, never tiring at his age of 75, whom I see as a true champion of peace; songs over the river, both Russian and American; the mass media and their coverage of our peace cruise, which could either increase the public response to it or to muffle it; and, finally, Mark Twain. You did leaf through his *Life on the Mississippi* before going to America, didn't you? Others, too, drew their information, which was a hundred years old, of course, from that book. Since then the population in Minneapolis, St. Paul, La Crosse, Davenport, and Burlington, which we passed, has increased five or tenfold, while in some places, for instance, St. Louis, it has sharply declined in recent decades. Many things, however, have not changed much since then.

So, what shall we begin with? With the river or Mark Twain?

Vladimir Nadein. With the river, of course. When I was looking at the bends of the Mississippi, I at times thought that there'll come another turn and I'll see the familiar traits of Tutayev or Yaroslavl. The Mississippi, just like the Volga, almost fell victim to man's light-minded belief in the meekness and mildness of nature. The pollution of both rivers with industrial waste had reached a dangerous level. The fate of the Mississippi has worried the Americans as deeply as the fate of the Volga has worried us, Russians. Both on the Mississippi and on the Volga very serious measures have been taken to clean the air and water. The first beneficial results have been achieved both here and there. While earlier it was jokingly said that you could not drown in the Mississippi, only dissolve, at

present, evidently, one might drown and even go for a swim not without pleasure. We did see some swimmers in the Mississippi.

S. K. Really? I saw only one, a young man from our party, who dived into the Mississippi for TV cameramen.

V. N. Many of us would have liked to do the same. We did not risk introducing our own preferences for spending leisure time into a foreign country. Americans prefer to swim in tiled pools located virtually a few meters away from the river shores which are more pleasant, in my view. In this, however, we were unlikely to come to terms with our hosts.

S. K. The legendary river attracted us all very much. In those upper reaches of it we were, I suppose, the first Soviets to appear, at least during the postwar period. Frankly speaking, I was afraid of being disappointed, I had imagined that its banks were much more built over, populated and over-industrialised. The Mississippi, however, flows between the leafy, bushy green banks. The sunrises and sunsets over the river are beautiful, and, in general, the river immediately makes you feel grateful to nature. Getting closer to nature also means getting closer to people. Both we and the Americans found ourselves on the same steamer going down a great river. We were all in the same boat and nobody wanted to rock it.

I must point out that I refer to the Mississippi before the place where the Missouri flows into it, here river is narrower than the Volga near Kostroma. It also has less traffic. Rarely can one see tugboats pushing 10 to 15 barges, all of them carrying some twenty thousand tons of cargo.

V. N. Those barges move linked together in four to six rows, taking up half of the river. From a distance one even feels frightened. It seemed that our steamer won't manage to squeeze between the barges and the river bank.

S. K. Passenger navigation, as we know and like it on the Volga, disappeared a long time ago on the Mississippi. There are no passenger lines there. Along the river there are only two cruise liners, which are rather expensive, the *Delta Queen* already 60 years old and the *Mississippi Queen*, which we did not see. Those two "queens" are the only relics of the Mississippi's romantic steamship days.

V. N. It is typical of an Americanist to compare America with itself. As for a newspaper satirist like myself, who has been to many parts of his own country on business, a comparison between "theirs" and "ours" seems to be more to the point. Looking at the empty Mississippi, I thought that the river also reflected national traits, for instance, the pragmatism of the Americans who believe that for pleasure it is cheaper and more convenient to travel by car and that on business it is both cheaper and faster to go by air.

S. K. In regard to the Americans and their habits, I would say that they even spend their leisure time more intensively. A river trip would be too slow for them and would not give them the active recreation they have become accustomed to on the country's Atlantic or Pacific coasts or in the Caribbean. But to return to our main subject, I would like to point out that the idea of a river peace cruise pays off both symbolically and practically. The Volga and the Mississippi are the great symbols of the two countries. Both have strong historic echoes, both are surrounded by a halo of glory. In practical terms, travelling down the Mississippi gave us the unrepeatable opportunity to watch the reaction of ordinary Americans to the appearance of Russian, Soviet people in their heartland. The river is a natural phenomenon, and the people's feelings were also like that, natural, frank and unreserved.

Our Mississippi trip was not very long, about 700 miles. Besides the points of departure and destination, St. Paul

and St. Louis, there were five other stops at riverside towns with a population ranging from six thousand as in Prairie du Chien to more than three hundred thousand as in Quad Cities, which is a conglomerate of four towns around Davenport. The locks also deserve special mention. On one section we passed, the difference in the level of the river with its rapids and waterfalls amounts to over 100 metres. Therefore, the Americans built a number of water-regulating dykes and 25 locks, without encroaching too much on the natural banks. The *Delta Queen* passed through those locks.

V. N. In English a lock also means a fastening mechanism, but on the Mississippi the locks became a kind of gate, an opening to help us discover the Americans and, perhaps, help them discover us. Local residents would gather at every lock. Sometimes the crowd was large, sometimes small, but I remember that once in the dead of night Esther Palo, our elderly fellow-traveller from Hollywood, who was as well-wishing as she was indefatigable, rather insistently asked me to come out on deck at once. I had to obey. On the bank, in the light of a lantern, I saw a young man with two little children. They had travelled almost two hundred miles to come to the lock only to say "Hello!" in Russian in a family chorus and to add in English that they wanted peace very much.

S. K. Well, it's time to move from the river to the people on its banks, to how they met us. Ceremonies were planned in advance in the towns along the route, and hundreds of people gathered at the moorings with posters reading "Welcome" in Russian (slightly misspelled which would have looked like "Welcom" in English). The mayors appeared at the rostrums to read their proclamations, declaring, for instance, that such and such a day was peace cruise day in the town of Dubuque and that such and such a day was the day of new beginnings in Burlington. The

Soviet and American flags hung from the main deck and a slogan on a blue canvass read: "We want peace, you want peace, let us work for peace together." There were shouts, songs and applause, then we would go ashore, walking to excursion buses through a cheering crowd of local people, and noticing smiles and the blue lakes of eyes of the inhabitants of the Midwestern farmlands.

V. N. Every day we were "taken over" to various homes, to various families. There was not always enough time for meetings, and there was not enough of us for all those who wished to receive us. The organisers had foreseen this and to avoid creating a marketlike situation, they had arranged contests, distributing all the "Russians" without asking us about our wishes. Each of us wore a badge with our names and numbers. As the bus was driving up to the appointed place, we could see from a distance posters with numbers over the heads of the greeting party, looking for those with whom we were destined to spend the coming day.

S. K. Such meetings both pleased and excited us, but the spontaneous meetings at the locks were the most touching of all. Americans, wearing their light, motley summer clothes, children, adults and senior citizens, stood at the locks in the very early morning, late evening or past midnight in the darkness lit by lanterns. They travelled dozens and even hundreds of miles so that for some ten to fifteen minutes they could see Soviet Russians for the first time travelling through America's heartland.

V. N. Those were meetings of smiles, unlike the conversations on board the *Delta Queen* where different views not only met, but also confronted each other.

S. K. On the steamer we had discussions on various subjects: the working groups considered disarmament problems, political relations between our two countries, cultural ties, and so on. It was not these discussions but the

meetings on the river banks which became the main element of the peace cruise.

When the *Delta Queen* was leaving St. Paul, three to four hundred people gathered at the moorings to see us off. There were also half a dozen Right-wing extremists with violently anti-Soviet posters but the majority were well-wishers. Remember the school children from the international language summer camp in Northern Minnesota? Their eyes shone when they looked at us and on their red T-shirts was printed the phrase "I love the Russian language" in Russian. The mayors of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the twin cities with a population of more than a million, wished us a happy journey. Then the steamer pulled out. Remember, on the same warm, late evening we were on deck, the steamer slowed down at the first lock, and suddenly ahead, over some distance, we saw fireworks, beautiful, noiseless clusters of colour sparks in the darkness. Naturally, we did not connect the fireworks with our appearance on the river but we then passed the lock and came to the town of Red Wing. It was dark, but the right bank of the Mississippi was lit by city lights. Thousands, literally thousands of people lined the bank. They stood silent, some shouted, welcoming us, waved their hands, others whistled, also in a welcoming style (in America whistling can be a sign of approval). I remember that you, Vladimir, also whistled in reply.

Those thousands on the evening riverside were absolutely unexpected, and I thought they must have come because the *Delta Queen* steamer was widely known. The members of the crew, however, told me that they had never seen anything like it and that the interest was certainly in us, Soviets. It all began with that—large welcoming crowds in the towns, which was more or less expected, and moving, unexpected meetings at the locks. Once, also in the late evening, several hundred people came to the lock near

the town of Muscatine and the mayor presented the Soviet cosmonaut Georgi Grechko the symbolic key of the town, saying, "Remember this word, Muscatine. There is no other town like this in the world." We remembered, both Muscatine and other places. When we were passing the town of Keokuk in the southern part of Iowa, thousands of people gathered on the bank at night and a choir and an orchestra performed American and Soviet songs.

V. N. Somebody in the crowd threw a stone at me. The stone flew from below rather long, hovered for an instant, and I caught it not without difficulty. The stone was wrapped with a moving message: "I'm very glad to have seen you. I'd be very grateful if you would send me a letter from Russia." It was the first time that such a stone was thrown at me and, I must confess I was awfully pleased.

S. K. In general, neither we nor the American organisers of the peace cruise had expected such a wide-scale and emotionally strong response. Its moral and philosophical implication was no less strong. I would like to analyse it without any illusions. Americans walked and drove up not to thoughtlessly fraternise with us. In my opinion, they were primarily motivated by curiosity and then by a well-wishing interest. By their appearance near the *Delta Queen* they performed a civic and very humane action, expressing the readiness to maintain normal relations with our country. Those hundreds and thousands who gathered on the Mississippi banks had desired, often subconsciously, to break through the terrible image of an enemy, built up by television and the press, to real human beings from a faraway country which was, as it were, in a state of hostility and rivalry with their own country.

V. N. Indeed. I don't think that people in our country are all the pictures of beauty. But I am simply at a loss when I see those freaks, monsters, filthy rogues and goril-

las, dressed in quilted jackets, which the American makers of numerous hit films use to portray Soviet people.

And now, imagine this situation. Suppose a passenger diesel ship, say, the *Alexander Pushkin*, is approaching Kamyshin or Balakhna. On board of it, together with the cosmonaut Georgi Grechko and the actress Vija Artmane, there is a foreign team of forty-three serpents and hags of Russian folk tales and two or three ugly sorcerers from Nikolai Gogol's story of the same title. Can you imagine the commotion in the town of Kamyshin, for instance? Evidently, many Americans were sincerely happy to see, instead of serpents, pleasant-looking people like Anatoli Zhuk, an experienced captain of the Dnieper flotilla, a dairy-maid from Poltava, Anna Sivolap, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet, or the physician Vladimir Shinkarenko.

S. K. People travelled dozens and hundreds of miles to see for themselves that we were also made of flesh and blood and, evidently, also loved our children and were concerned about their future and that all of us, as the mayor of La Crosse said, put on our trousers not over our heads.

This was a kind of primitive mystery enacted in the supercivilised 20th century. The people of one nuclear power, having seen that the citizens of another nuclear power are normal human beings believe and, at the same time, don't quite believe their own eyes. I remember a definition I heard from Daniel Yankelovich, head of a well-known firm engaged in sampling public opinion. He said that the Americans' attitude towards the Soviet Union was dominated by primordial fear, the fear of the people who believed in the "Soviet threat". There, during the cruise along the great river through America's heartland, also emerged something primordial. It was not, however, fear, it was primordial curiosity and friendliness, man's

intrinsic desire to discover the truth independently. While the mass media was hell-bent on dehumanising the other man, the man of the other society, what took place during the personal contacts was the process of rehumanisation, as it were, of restoring human traits in the image of the other man. Putting it another way, it was a transition from dehumanisation to humanisation, however awkward this may sound.

V. N. I would not like to compete with you, Stanislav, in coining awkward phrases, but I would like, nevertheless, to elaborate on your image. The point is that the humanisation of us, Soviet people, took place through people and thanks to people. The mass media did not arouse the Americans' interest in us, they, in a way, responded to it unwillingly. I have already said that there was "not enough" of us to meet all those wishing to see us. Because there were very many people willing to meet us in an informal, home atmosphere, over lunch. There were many questions, and we replied to them with sincere openness, sharing successes and not concealing the difficulties. As often as not we began in one home, where three or four neighbouring families would come for a glass of Coca Cola, and continue the lunch in another home, sometimes some twenty miles away from the first. There were other guests there, with their own questions and interests. Dinner would end well past midnight, at a third home. The interest of the new men and women, who came from the neighbouring houses, never faded, although the next morning they had to go to work. This purely human interest was primary while the reaction of the press, even the "small-time", local ones, was secondary. The attitude of the central press and the "pillars" of national television is a separate subject.

S. K. The newspapers in the towns we visited gave wide coverage to the peace cruise. There were many nice photos

as well as reports which were rather objective, although somewhat superficial, because the reporters never dealt with the profound meaning of what was happening and, perhaps, did not even understand it. Thanks to the indefatigable Lou Friedman, Press Coordinator of the Cruise, news conferences were held everywhere. National television, that is, the TV corporations broadcasting throughout the USA, did not join in at once, yet on the second or third day, two of them, CBS and NBC, landed their parties on board the *Delta Queen*.

Later a helicopter also hovered over the steamer ensuring television audiences an aerial view. A *Time* photographer would drove us all to the upper deck for a group snapshot. Some of the less adroit reporters felt that a cabin on board the *Delta Queen* was not enough for them, and they accompanied us along the bank in cars. The old steamer with a dazzlingly red wheel on the aft and two national flags hanging from the deck got onto the TV evening news, before the eyes of dozens of millions of Americans. NBC and CBS broadcast an interview with Soviet and American participants in the cruise. There was a wide response to it. The American participants were both surprised and pleased. Ed Rothberg, a veteran of the peace movement, said that it was probably the first time since the Vietnam war when American antiwar organisations managed to break through to US mainstream.

V. N. During the trip we often encountered cases showing that Americans knew nothing about the Soviet Union. Their ignorance was surprising and at times mysterious. For instance, we have visited several universities, including those in Minnesota and Wisconsin. We saw that there was plenty of information about the Soviet Union. The libraries contained an impressive amount of various material, including many books by Soviet authors. The numerous electronic devices make it possible to promptly exchange

information, getting copies of various sections from the relevant book in a matter of minutes. In short, scholars are intensively studying the Soviet Union.

S. K. Many Americans motivated by noble and sincere feelings desire to learn more about the Soviet Union. There were dozens of them on board the *Delta Queen*, but I would like to single out two of them. They were Howard and Alice Frazier, who had initiated the Volga and, later, Mississippi cruises. Howard, 75, had been in government service from the 1930s to the late 1960s. Alice, a teacher and a psychologist, was 65. The Mississippi cruise cost them two years of untiring effort.

V. N. Perhaps we should speak about this in greater detail for the sake of those readers who do not understand anything about the efforts of a private person in the world of private enterprise.

Imagine that a couple of pensioners with one part-time helper make up the entire staff of a Committee, an Institute or an Academy. (Americans willingly use important-sounding names with capital letters.) These outfits are entirely independent and run on full cost-accounting. That is, they can rely only on themselves.

So, two elderly persons mail thousands of letters to all parts of the country. At the same time they also place ads in newspapers. They want to find out who is interested in participating in a cruise which would cost approximately two thousand dollars or more. They determine long-term needs, contact tourist agencies and local authorities. They organise social functions, for instance, contests among school pupils in the area where the cruise would take place. These are literary contests for the best composition about peace and friendship between our countries. The winners—in this case, Mike Mercurio and Stephanie Callert—are invited to make the trip free. Later Stephanie will read her

essay in Dubuque's public garden to the applause of the moved American and Soviet listeners.

S. K. At the beginning there was the humdrum of life—the problem of financial backing. They had to find someone who would agree to pay approximately 230,000 dollars in advance to charter the *Delta Queen* for a trip from St. Paul to St. Louis.

Those two people, not young any more, spent at least two years on all this without any profit for themselves. There were so many sleepless nights, concerns and doubts, so many problems. Things moved ahead on the sheer enthusiasm of the Fraziers and their Soviet friends and partners, of course. Both Howard and Alice stayed with us throughout the entire cruise and did everything practically without any helpers.

V. N. You remember, Stanislav, Howard's reply to your sympathetic question about whether he was tired?

S. K. He said that the idea of tiredness simply did not come into his notion of life.

V. N. On the last day I conducted an express interview among the American participants in the cruise. I asked all of them these three questions: First, would you take part in a similar cruise again? Second, if so, how would you improve it? Third, if you were a Soviet citizen, what would you do on returning home after the cruise?

Now I switch on the tape-recorder to listen again to the familiar voices. Of course, many say that the questions are not so simple, especially, the last one. Yet, it is not difficult to summarize the answers because the feelings and even the words of many were identical. Everyone expressed his great satisfaction with the trip, everyone without a single exception. Many assured us that perhaps those were the happiest days in their lives. Criticism of the organisation was minimal and chiefly concerned the need for more frequent meetings and more profound discussions of the problems

we spoke about on board. Finally, the American participants expressed the same wishes as the Soviet Peace Committee did in organising the trip, making it our duty to emphasise time and again that peace and friendship with the people of the United States was not a starry-eyed dream, but a real possibility and a vital necessity.

S. K. We returned home with a desire to tell about our impressions and to do our part to promote mutual understanding. We have a host of impressions. I remember Russian songs, wise and mischievous, sounding over the American river. Tatyana Petrova sang them lively and with great feeling. The Americans listened, not understanding the words, but feeling the beauty of the songs of another nation, trying to guess where this beauty was.

I think each of us has brought home children's drawings among the souvenirs. I also have them, ten drawings made by American schoolchildren. One youthful artist drew a giraffe, his favourite animal, another drew children swimming, the third a landscape with a rainbow, the fourth a cow with a hanging udder and the inscription: "Milk her and she will feel better". In the accompanying letter Ann Stall, a librarian at Gompers School in Madison, Wisconsin, wrote the following: "We would like every school in our country to have ten drawings by Soviet children and every school in the Soviet Union to have ten drawings by American children. We beg you to send us in return pictures drawn by your children. A photograph of the child, the author of the drawing would increase its emotional impact on the everyday American many times over and underscore our human unity."

I have mentioned the primordial fear of our country which has been implanted in the Americans and the primordial curiosity and well-wishing we felt in the towns and at the locks along the Mississippi. There is also something primordial in the exchange of children's drawings. People

want to communicate with one another and unite on the eternal, granite foundation of the love of children and of life, opposing nuclear death. Doesn't this manifest new political thinking and a new moral approach? One feels that the Americans have a new, enhanced interest in us, in our peace initiatives, in our perestroika, in our greater openness and glasnost.

V. N. The point is that, of course, besides the common and the most important thing which unites us all—the striving to preserve world peace—there is also a range of other, extremely important problems. Joint programmes, which are being developed after Geneva, may seriously influence the lives of many of us. Judging by everything, specialists will find a common language. Unfortunately, just like on the Mississippi trip, this will again be English alone.

Americans embarrassingly confessed to us their old and common shortcoming, a poor knowledge of foreign languages in general and of ours in particular, although interest in the Russian language is growing. More people, not only college students, but also school pupils have begun to study it. There are also many complaints, it is said that Russian is too difficult for a foreigner to learn. I, personally, am convinced that there are no easy-to-learn languages and that ours has been labelled as particularly difficult quite undeservedly. Of course, one cannot learn it in a month, but what is so strange about this? If it were different, neither Chekhov nor Mark Twain would sound so excellent in it.

Incidentally, about Mark Twain. Or, to be more exact, about Mark Twains. Central Television broadcast a short story about William McLinn, one of our fellow-travellers on the Mississippi cruise. Bill took first place at an international contest of Mark Twain impersonators (there are such persons in the country). As for the gait and voice, it is

not for us to judge, we did not see the real Mark Twain, so we have to trust the panel of judges in this area. We can, however, testify to the fact that Bill actively works for peace, freedom and justice, for the ideals that were also a source of inspiration to Mark Twain.

In general, the area along the route had Mark Twains in abundance. Every town greeted us with its own Mark Twain, wearing striped trousers, a dinner-jacket and a vest, and leaning on the invariable walking-stick. In Hannibal where Samuel Clemens, who later became a brilliant writer, spent his childhood we were met by a whole constellation of his literary characters, from Tom Sawyer with Becky Thatcher to Muff Potter, hoarse-voiced and picturesque in his carefully designed rags, who accompanied us on the bus trip. As for the common impersonators of the writer, they were teeming in Hannibal and we were simply dazzled by them. Even a souvenir vendor next to the river port was dressed up like the great satirist. He wore the same grey moustache and vest, but there the similarity ended, for the vendor asked naively: "Do you mean to say that they know Mark Twain in Russia?"

S. K. Well, this ignorance is quite innocent. As often as not, however, the lack of knowledge about our country was horrifying. Several times I was asked the same question: Can you, Soviets, be trusted? And even with a "supplement", such as you seem to look like normal people, but are you really? The question is as awful as it is ridiculous. If a person believes in advance that one cannot be trusted, trust on his part is ruled out. It is awful in its hopelessness. On the other hand, it is ridiculous and hurts us when we, with our wartime memories, have to prove to someone that we sincerely want peace. In the final analysis, if those who ask us do not trust us, they should trust themselves, their common sense, their instinct of self-preservation. Thus, they should understand "through

themselves", as it were, that neither is the other nation devoid of the sense of self-preservation.

In general, to assess the significance of the Mississippi peace cruise realistically, I would like to recall an episode that occurred in St. Louis. At a ceremony, meeting local residents and at the same time saying good-bye to the *Delta Queen*, the Soviet journalist, Vladimir Chernov from Volgograd, poured a flask of Volga water he had brought from home into a vase with water from the Mississippi. It was a gesture symbolising the confluence of the two rivers and the two nations. An excellent gesture but it was, of course, just a vase of water from the great Mississippi and a flask of water from the great Volga. Just like our cruise. Just a drop. We must make more efforts to get both the rivers and nations to draw closer together in all earnest. We must believe in the ultimate success. Where was it, in what town on the Mississippi did you and I read this meaningful aphorism: "It is only those, who are not indifferent, who can improve this world?"

August 1986

The End and the Means or a Look-Back on History Prompted by the Events of One Day

When face to face you cannot see the features. If we extend Yesenin's lyrics to international politics, it would imply that it is impossible to see the present properly looking at it from its own context, from today. In order to see the face, one has to step away, to look from a distance. To appraise the significance of a political phenomenon, one must look at it from the past (of course, a look from the future would be even better, but it, alas, can be presented solely in futurological scenarios). History alone gives us a three-dimensional view of the present.

Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the United Nations in December 1988 and his address at the General Assembly session are reminiscent of an event of almost 30 years ago, when another Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, stayed in New York nearly one month, from September 19 to October 13, 1960.

Between the two visits is a period filled with historical events and the striking evolution in the Soviet political thinking. For the sake of clarity and better understanding, this enormous difference can be seen in the political meaning of two outwardly consonant words which we added to the international political language—*troika* (three) and *perestroika*. The former has already sunk into oblivion, remaining only in books on diplomatic history. But in the autumn of 1960 it was on everyone's lips. Nikita

Khrushchev, displeased with the actions of UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld in the peace-keeping operation in the Belgian Congo, demanded that the division of the world into socialist, capitalist and neutral (non-aligned) countries should be organisationally formalised within the structure of the United Nations executive body, its Secretariat, including the appointment of three Secretaries-General instead of one according to the Charter. Hence troika or a trio. This did not only reflect an insistence on the principle of equal representation and participation in the United Nations, where the Western powers as a matter of fact ran the show. It also had a broader, strategic objective, an assessment of the future. After the torpidity of the last years under Stalin, after the extreme ferocity of the Cold War, those were the Soviet Union's first "comings out into the open". It was believed that the socialist system, having rid itself of the "consequences of the personality cult", needed no restructuring and would triumphantly score point after point in its favour. It was also expected that its political alliance with the non-aligned countries, which would, of course, also follow the socialist path, would doom the decaying capitalist camp to a quick and inevitable defeat. Such was the stake on confrontation (not military, but political) that was behind Khrushchev's idea of a UN *troika,* which to be honest, looked more like the proverbial swan, crawfish and pike. This idea did not "work" and had only a short life in the international vocabulary.

Troika and perestroika... This is the distance between the old thinking and the new thinking brought to life by the lessons of history. Although enormous differences between the member states of the world community remain, the Soviet policy now places the emphasis on the community of the world coming from the awareness of its common destiny. Nowhere else had this emphasis been

made so forcefully and resolutely as in Mikhail Gorbachev's address at the United Nations. The Soviet leader emphasized before most representative international audience that at present we are particularly interested in being correctly understood: our perestroika contains a tremendous potential for promoting peace and international cooperation.

This is a potential for promoting unity, not division.

The keynote, which has become familiar to us over the past three years, sounded more strongly than ever before in Mikhail Gorbachev's UN speech:

"We are entering an era in which progress will be based on the common interests of the whole of humankind...

"Further global progress is now possible only through a quest for universal consensus in the movement towards a new world order.

"... It is precisely these steps that we must take in our joint quest for *the supremacy of the idea central to all mankind* over the multitude of centrifugal trends."

Who could have foreseen the December of 1988 in the autumn of 1960? And who can look 28 years ahead, to the year 2016? We have no gift of clairvoyance, so let us return to that New York autumn to get a closer view of the march of history.

Nikita Khrushchev came to New York aboard the diesel ship *Baltika* to attend the 15th Session of the UN General Assembly, where he spoke from its rostrum approximately ten times. This was certainly the world's number one event, particularly because, responding to Moscow's appeal, the leaders of the European socialist countries and of a number of influential non-aligned states had also arrived in New York. Moreover, demonstrating his temperament, rudish frankness and simplistically propagandist treatment of matters of international diplomacy, Khrushchev spoke the truth straight from the

shoulder and deliberately turned the General Assembly into an arena of direct confrontation with the USA and, as he put it, other states of monopoly capital.

A son of his stern and, in a way, high-handed times, Khrushchev disregarded all manners. His shoe-banging on the table in the General Assembly Hall, in full view, when he disliked something in the statement by a Philippine delegate, went down in history which is fond of registering curiosities. In the West it was dubbed "shoe diplomacy", while in the Soviet Union it was either hushed up embarrassingly or, on the contrary, attempts were made to present it as a master stroke of a new type of diplomacy: you see, it was said, the lengths to which one has to go to in order to assert the "class approach" and express contempt for the "puppets of US imperialism".

All this, however, is nothing more than eye-catching trivia which should not overshadow the essential. Looking back from the present, one can see the drama of history. Undoubtedly, Khrushchev was a man of peace, he expressed the peaceful aspirations of our people, but his analysis of the situation, which bore the traits of Stalinist dogmatism, was not accurate. It exaggerated the aggressive drive of the other side, while his methods repelled the USA and other Western powers and in the end only put off the attainment of peaceful objectives rather than brought them closer. To use contemporary terminology, it can be said that his approach (our approach) was exceedingly ideologised. While promoting the principles of peaceful coexistence, he never tired of repeating a phrase in this or other variations: "We shall bury you." This only angered and embittered the Americans. He acknowledged the right of every nation to choose its own political system, but at the same time he maintained that "the elimination of the capitalist system is the fundamental issue of society's development". According to his notion which, as a matter

of fact, many of our propagandists have been reproducing until recent years, the Americans were a good and peace-loving people while the US government was bad and aggressive, and represented not the people but only Wall Street tycoons. I have no intentions of drawing a simplified picture of the opposite state of affairs and idealising the complex mechanism of US democracy. But that head-on—and erroneous—contraposition of the government and the people enraged the Americans. "Please don't bite us, you are biting us," the TV commentator David Susskind said to Khrushchev. The latter answered: "No, it's you who are biting us. The U-2 flight is your bite."

The incident, when the high-altitude US spy plane was shot down near Sverdlovsk on May 1, 1960, was then at the centre of the Soviet-American controversy. At present spy satellites are beyond anybody's reach and are in fact recognised as an existing element of international affairs in a world packed with nuclear missile weapons. But that incident with the U-2 plane and its pilot, who survived and was captured, set off a full-scale crisis which foiled a Paris summit meeting of four powers (the USSR, the USA, France, and Great Britain). It led to the cancellation of the President Eisenhower's official visit to the USSR and, finally, brought Khrushchev across the ocean, to the UN General Assembly session, in a state of righteous indignation. Furthermore, another American war plane, the RB-47, invaded Soviet air space in the region of the Kola Peninsula on July 1 of the same year and was also shot down. Washington was rather embarrassed, President Eisenhower stopped the spy missions, although in principle he reserved the American government's right to conduct reconnaissance operations with regard to a country which kept its military activities secret.

Events unfolded in that noisy, spy-thriller and even

buffoon style, creating the impression of both artificially generated, and at the same time genuine tension.

Among other things, 1960 went down in history as Africa's year of liberation. Independent states were proclaimed in Africa one after another, replacing the former colonies. The Soviet Union wholeheartedly welcomed the process. Meanwhile, internecine strife flared up in the Belgium Congo, which had recently become independent, not without instigation on the part of the former colonial masters. The separatists assassinated the Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba. According to Moscow's estimates, the UN peace-keeping forces dispatched there assisted the imperialist intrigues. As for the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld (a Swedish aristocrat and mystic, who was killed in an air crash in the Congo later that year), Khrushchev wanted to oust him from the United Nations and branded him as a servant of US monopoly capital. Everything became confused in those days of Khrushchev's *Sturm und Drang* ("storm and onslaught") on New York. There was the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and personal attacks on the UN top official, which certainly did not strengthen our positions. All this still awaits an adequate reflection in our historical literature because this literature also needs reconsideration and restructuring.

Khrushchev's speeches and interviews at the United Nations comprise 300 pages in the second volume of his foreign policy statements for 1960. It is instructive reading. The documents yellowed with age bear the impressive stamp of the time. Read them, if only to see where and how far we, the people of today, have come. It seems to me that the Soviet leader overplayed his hand in the incidents with the two planes. While inside the USSR, given the widespread view of the USA in those days, it might have been justified from a propaganda point of view, in the

West, among the broad sections of public opinion, to say nothing of political circles, overplaying meant a loss.

Khrushchev knew little about the United States or the "other monopoly capital states." Alas, this is a common shortcoming of many Soviet politicians. He knew little about the USA and wasn't willing to learn much. He hated "capitalism" with all his "theoretical" and also practical ardour inherited from his mining youth. However, during his actual contacts with individual "representatives" of that capitalism, be it President Eisenhower or a journalist, he usually restrained himself and avoided adopting a derogatory tone. On the contrary, despite his coarseness, he displayed a humane, good-natured and sympathetic attitude. It was at those times that there came out in him something totally absent in our political vocabulary of the '60s which is now written in block capitals on the banner of new thinking—*the universal human approach*. Or, let me say, normally human, simply human, humane. Something which those who zealously preached and practised Stalinism used to extirpate from our people for decades as the birth-marks of the past. Something normally human which prompts us without hesitation to accept foreign aid for the victims of the earthquake in Armenia, which we would have rejected without hesitation in the past. We see British firemen and French and American rescue workers with their specially trained dogs on our soil, only two or three days after the calamity, and we hardly suspect them of being agents of the CIA, the British Intelligence Service or ... whatever the French intelligence service is called.

"Ignorance is a demon," said Marx, and he made no allowances for Marxists either. This demon gains strength upon entering into an alliance with dogmatism. For dogmatists even the laws of development are part of a set of ironclad tenets established once and for all, convenient for people lazy in their minds or filled with a career-seeking

zeal. An ideologised view of the world is good only when it does not distort reality. It was a realistic view which Khrushchev and his entourage lacked. They underestimated the viability and the gigantic service life of capitalism, primarily, American capitalism. They failed to foresee that the system of private enterprise would be the first to straddle the electronic horse of the scientific and technological revolution. They exaggerated the aggressive drive of the West. Khrushchev assured the former colonies that they would be able to reach the level of the economically advanced countries within one generation, not foreseeing, of course, the current problem of catastrophic foreign debt, the solution of which Mikhail Gorbachev discussed from the UN rostrum.

These crying miscalculations can be explained by a failure to know many basic facts and to understand the trends of development, by the blind, one can say religious, faith in a distorted dogmatic Marxism which, like any religion, sets its hopes on a miracle. Khrushchev did promise then that the present generation would live under communism. Add to this his conviction that the West was on the decline (from his point of view, we had left it far behind in the parameters of democracy and were about to outstrip it economically) and the hope that the power of the socialist system would be redoubled by a close political alliance with the non-aligned world, then we get a background unequivocally advantageous to us and, in the Soviet leadership's view, it was against this background that the dialogue between the Soviet Union and the West proceeded.

Indeed, Khrushchev was sincerely in favour of peaceful coexistence. He proved this by his behaviour in October 1962, in the dramatic days of the "Caribbean missile crisis". Having secretly delivered missiles to Cuba, he later agreed to remove them, openly, under American pressure;

he accepted humiliation in order to avoid a nuclear conflict. Yes, he wanted peace, but because of his world view, of the deceptively radiant prospect of our rapidly-growing superiority over the other side, his gravitation towards a dialogue with the West was not all-absorbing (I have almost not touched upon the policy of the other side; it, similarly, was not drawn to a dialogue the way it is now, having not yet gone through the moral and political trials of the subsequent decades nor piled up the senseless mountains of nuclear-missile weapons).

Furthermore, the instruments of Soviet foreign policy and diplomacy, the level of understanding and consideration of the legitimate interests of the Western powers did not correspond to its declared peaceful objectives. We must admit that there was more work "for effect" than a painstaking and difficult quest for a real framework for compromise. At the 15th Session of the UN General Assembly Khrushchev outlined the main provisions of a Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament. The treaty envisioned a complete farewell to arms, from the elimination of nuclear arsenals to the closure of military schools. It was proposed to accomplish all this within four years, which was obviously unrealistic. Another, agreed upon period was not ruled out, although the Soviet leader had more than once ridiculed the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, who allotted from five to ten years for talks on reaching agreement. Now, nearly three decades later, one can see how hasty they both were. The proposals for a verification mechanism were very vague, which is also clearly seen in hindsight and considering the cardinal experience of the Soviet-American INF Treaty.

The goal was extremely noble, but, as any goal it cannot be judged separately from the means proposed to attain it. It was proposed to discuss the draft treaty on general and complete disarmament at the UN General

Assembly, which in itself reduced the work on it to the level of an international propaganda exercise. Today, after the countless Geneva rounds of talks, we understand that such work and discussions are not conducted in that way. In those days, however, it became impossible to cope even with the simplest stumbling block: where to conduct discussions, at the General Assembly or in the Political Committee, as the Western powers insisted. This was yet another victory for a triumphant lack of understanding rather than for common sense. And this was far from being the last time.

When Khrushchev left New York, approximately three weeks remained before the 1960 presidential elections in the United States and his speeches fitted into the context of the election campaign. The elderly General Eisenhower, preparing to leave the White House, made his famous warning against the dangerously growing influence of the "military-industrial complex". But the young and charming John Kennedy, playing on the "US missile lag", used to his advantage Khrushchev's vivid description of a Soviet plant where missiles rolled off the assembly line "like sausages". Kennedy's allegations were false, but they helped him defeat Nixon and become President. He then launched the mammoth programme to build a thousand Minuteman ICBMs. In the autumn of 1962 the Soviet Union removed its missiles from Cuba under American pressure but the Soviet political and military leaders drew practical conclusions from America's obvious superiority in nuclear missiles (according to the then US Defence Secretary, Robert McNamara, the Americans had 30 times as many warheads as we did). When Khrushchev was ousted from power two years later, our military, it seems, received a carte blanche.

It still remains for Soviet scholars to write a history of our foreign and military policy of the past few decades in

which a serious analytic and not apologetic approach would be predominant and which would include the badly needed element of criticism. As long as documents remain classified, one can only guess (although with a high degree of probability) what actually happened, how the Soviet-American confrontation developed, pushed along by the action-counteraction principle. While the Americans fought in Vietnam, we were busy making up for our nuclear-missile lag. A military-strategic parity was reached by the early 1970s, and the important SALT and ABM treaties were concluded during "Detente No. 1", but new types of missiles continued to roll off the assembly lines "like sausages". It was no easy thing to stop the strong inertia of the military build-up because the notorious gross output and the driving force of departmentalism, which was a hallmark of Brezhnev's times and stagnation, also worked in its favour. One thing led to another. The neo-conservatives, who strengthened their positions in the United States, maintained that the Soviet armaments build-up also meant a growing Soviet threat, and in 1980 that helped Ronald Reagan become president. Everybody remembers that the final round of the election was particularly fierce. Never before had the Apocalypse been mentioned so often. Reagan staked two trillion dollars, the sum total of the arms bills during his presidency. The arms race reached its peak of madness.

Then came the dawn of a new era. The change of leadership in the Soviet Union brought along a qualitatively new view of the realities of the world, "a new world", as Mikhail Gorbachev put it in New York. I do not need to remind the reader of present-day events that are still fresh in our minds. The moment of understanding was achieved through Geneva and Reykjavik, although not immediately and not easily; the moment of truth, as it was called in Geneva in 1987. Finally, in 1988 the INF Treaty made a

genuine breakthrough. It flung the door open to goodwill, elements of confidence, civilised dialogue and personal contacts, which have become the norm and which made it possible so naturally to agree on the principle of continuity with George Bush.

In other words, a mechanism of interaction was set in motion by the efforts of both sides in place of the negative action-counteraction mechanism. It holds no promise of miracles or easy results, but there is a high level of agreement as to which direction to move and how to go about it, as regards both the end and the means.

There is also one more thing which we cannot overlook in assessing this period. In 1960 the Soviet Union, by a decision of its Supreme Soviet, announced a unilateral reduction of the Soviet Armed Forces by 1,200,000 men. The move was emphasized in Khrushchev's main statements at the United Nations. We reduced the number of our servicemen by exactly one-third. Now there has been another unilateral action—the reduction of our Armed Forces by 500,000 men, which is approximately one-tenth of their total strength (according to Western estimates, for our own data have not yet been published). A direct comparison may seem "disadvantageous", but it is nevertheless necessary, since it is only from objective facts that one can draw correct conclusions. This comparison shows, in particular, the intensity with which both our life and that of the world has been developing along the lines of militarisation. Official explanations are also insufficient in this area, but it is apparent that the strength of our armed forces grew during both the real and exaggerated tension in Soviet-Chinese relations in the 1960s and 1970s. Along the demarcation line in Europe the action-counteraction principle also made itself felt with full force. (Recall the growing strength of the West German army, the Bundeswehr.) We should also add to this our own "gross-output"

departmentalism unrestrained by a strong and farsighted political leadership.

The troop reduction of half a million and the announced withdrawal of a part of our troops from Mongolia and Eastern Europe are an admission that we have gone too far in the field of military build-up. This is weighty evidence to the effect that perestroika really possesses a "tremendous potential for promoting peace and international cooperation". And this evidence lies in the very sphere where proof is demanded of us more often and persistently in the West and also in the East for that matter. The new steps help create a favourable climate for the forthcoming, truly historic negotiations on conventional armaments and armed forces from the Atlantic to the Urals. The negotiations will not be easy, for NATO continues to claim that the Warsaw Treaty Organisation has a superiority in this field, but their success is both possible and necessary. Their success will give a fresh impetus to the creation of a "common European home" and the entire process of restructuring international relations.

We are on the right track. There is no doubt about that. What we need is even more courage in practical undertakings of the type that were announced from the UN rostrum. This type of courage is a hallmark of farsightedness and wisdom. We must be even more open, in particular, in areas that were closed to both our people and the rest of the world by secrecy which was stupidly absolutised and practised for decades. Openness pays off, both politically and materially, with the resources that are released through the reduction in military spending.

It was impossible twenty-eight years ago to speak about tolerance, the readiness to see something that was different as not necessarily bad or hostile, the ability to learn to live side by side while remaining different and not always in full agreement with each other. We have rejected the foolish

dogma of our infallibility. We are beginning to understand others and want to be understood ourselves in the new era of perestroika, because this will give us reliable guarantees of its success. Meanwhile, others are beginning to understand us much better, too.

December 1988

The Way to a Shore Without Enmity

It would be useful to cast a look back on one of the early landmarks of the perestroika period. On January 15, 1986 the Soviet leadership proposed a programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of the 20th century. The proposal was outlined in a special statement by Mikhail Gorbachev.

It was a three-stage programme to a nuclear weapons-free world, as it were. In the first stage (5 to 8 years) it was proposed that the USSR and the USA should cut their strategic nuclear weapons by half and fully eliminate their medium-range missiles in Europe. The rest of the nuclear powers would join in the process during the second stage to begin not later than 1990 and lasting from 5 to 7 years. Initially, they should pledge to freeze their nuclear weapons. The third stage, from 1995 to 2000, would complete the elimination of nuclear arsenals and enable mankind to enter the next century without apocalyptic nightmares accompanying the second half of the twentieth century.

This was the strategic essence of the announced programme. Among other things, it removed the most acute threat of those days, the extension of the arms race into outer space. In addition, the programme provided for a complete ban on nuclear tests, the elimination of chemical weapons by the end of the century and—in general form—

for the agreed cuts of conventional weapons and armed forces both in the East and West. The principle of disarmament for development was addressed to the developing countries to replace the militarist principle of armament instead of development.

What have we achieved today, comparing what was conceived with what has been done, and what is coming? What is in the offing? It is unlikely that during the remainder of the first stage it will be possible to halve the Soviet and US strategic nuclear weapons in actual fact, but the relevant treaty, the rough copy of which lies on the table of the Geneva talks, is most likely to be worked out, signed and come into force.

Britain, France and China are unlikely to join in the process of nuclear disarmament, as was planned, from 1990, but the USSR and the USA are already destroying their intermediate and shorter-range missiles in conditions of all-pervading, on-site inspection which is removing their mutual distrust.

Thanks to the same hitherto unseen readiness for effective on-site inspection the prospect of a complete ban on the two powers' nuclear testing is becoming very real.

The news from Paris raises the hope that chemical weapons could really be eliminated even before the end of the century. The Soviet Union will unilaterally start to destroy its own stockpiles of these weapons this year, without waiting for an international agreement.

The news from Vienna holds the promise of talks on the reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces, which is expected to be much more substantial than was implied in the January 15 Soviet Statement, and not only in Central Europe, but throughout the continent, from the Atlantic to the Urals. The Soviet Union has already fired the first peaceful salvo in this historic campaign to reduce military confrontation. I am referring to

the unilateral cuts in the Soviet Armed Forces announced by Mikhail Gorbachev in New York.

To the main philosophic question, which was put by the January 15 Statement, that is, whether we are going to enter the new century and new millennium without military atoms the only answer so far is hope.

There is the hope that the confidence between yesterday's antagonists will assume qualitatively new dimensions to persuade the West to give up the strategy of nuclear deterrence. In the opinion of George Shultz, the principle of nuclear deterrence will not be everlasting, but will be replaced by something else in some twenty years. This is a welcome statement, although its time framework does not coincide with what has been proposed by Moscow. It must be noted, however, that the former Secretary of State was ahead of most of the American Establishment in his thoughts and feelings. Was this because he met the new type of Soviet leaders more often?

The nuclear weapon-free world is not an end in itself nevertheless. Nor is it identical with a secure world. The main thing is to move towards the latter, and this movement could be broader, more unexpected, more roundabout. When one crosses a river in a boat to get to the other bank, one chooses a reference point towards which to row. The river (just like international relations), however, has a strong and capricious current. Despite all one's efforts, the boat is carried away and one must land farther downstream. So what should one do? Feel annoyed at the failure to get to the reference point or be pleased that one did get to the other bank after all?

It is dangerous to jump to conclusions, but it seems to me that in recent years the world has reached the other, safer bank and would like to entrench itself there on the bridgehead of dialogue and cooperation.

We are on the other bank where we find that our

Western partners have a much greater desire to cooperate with us. The same is true of the East if one takes into account the current normalisation of Soviet-Chinese relations and changes, although insufficient, in relations with Japan. Furthermore, there is a dying down of regional conflicts which occurred in the past year.

On the new bank—did you notice it?—we stopped having nuclear nightmares, although the horrible weapons remain. On the new bank "the threat of Soviet expansionism" no longer looms over the whole world in the opinion of the Americans or, say, West Germans. The same is true of us regarding American imperialism, although the division of the world and rather profound differences in it have not disappeared. Yesterday's adversaries remain where they were, but they have been stripped of their former image, the image of an enemy. For that image grows in the mind's eye when somebody is about to attack you, when he has raised his hand to strike. Who wants to attack whom if we take the present situation and its reflection in mass consciousness? Who is raising his hand? Who is in such an acute phase of protracted postwar confrontation with us which would be fraught with an armed conflict? The clouds have dispersed, they have been dispelled. Detente! This key word of the 1970s, however, seems insufficient to us. It has the ring of something temporary, and we are looking forward to something permanent, to the other world on the other bank. We proclaim the supremacy of the common interests of humanity over the countless centrifugal forces.

Logically enough, this supremacy materialises unexpectedly in people, in the behaviour of statesmen. Even our critic of many years Franz Josef Strauss, the Bavarian riddled with our sarcastic verbal arrows, became kinder before his death and had a good word to say of perestroika. Or take Ronald Reagan, the foremost of the images of an enemy; what a change! Parting with him, we

catch ourselves feeling a touch of nostalgia. However, what gives us hope is a TV episode filmed in December. A sunny winter midday, the porch of Commandant's house on Governor's island in the New York harbour. Reagan came out to meet Gorbachev, and then a third man appeared next to him, somehow imperceptibly and modestly. It was George Bush whose appearance showed continuity. This is a precious episode.

In a word, we turned to them with an open face, without visors, and so did they. What went into action was the law of contrast between what we were and what we are, between the old and new faces, between the old and new policies. The law of contrast went into action and it is still at work, yielding its major benefits. It is, however, a law of temporary action. The old is pushed back and forgotten, and the new, in order to work, must renew itself. They have turned to us not because they are sentimental, and not only because they are grateful to us for changing and becoming more humane. Gratitude is only the upper layer. The main reason, as always, is pragmatic. It lies in the intertwining of their practical interests with our interests of perestroika. The main thing is that this is a common interest. We have given each other an increased sense of security and benefit.

Take, for instance, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, the "iron lady". So far she is not following even Shultz in giving up the concept of nuclear deterrence regarding the Soviet Union. She will not get Britain to join in nuclear disarmament during the next year as was envisaged in our programme. Nor will she budge from her personal and common Western strategic principle: sufficient military strength, strength and once again strength as the basis for any successful dialogue with the Soviet Union. Just listen, however, to what she has to say about the Soviet leader, what words she uses—you will not find them in the Soviet

press because even our inveterate flatterers are holding their tongues in the new conditions. Just listen to this, for who is going to accuse of flattery the "iron lady" of the British Isles?

We are very lucky, said Mrs. Margaret Thatcher in an ITV interview, to have such a political leader as Gorbachev, a man of great vision and courage. If he puts his reforms into practice, the world will become safer and, the Cold War, as it seems to me, will come to an end.

That is how Mrs. Thatcher is searching for her own way to us, expressing her understanding of the common interest, her own attitude towards the supremacy of the interests of all mankind.

No matter whether we have become farther from or closer to a nuclear weapons-free world, favourable international conditions have been created in recent years for carrying out our perestroika. In my view, this is the fundamental conclusion and result for today. This is a tremendous achievement of innovative foreign policy, and above all, of perestroika itself, of our immersion into it, into solving its extremely difficult problems. There is no more convincing proof than that of the Soviet desire for peace which the rest of the world is now ready to believe. The reduction of armed forces and military expenditures and rechannelling of released sources to peaceful purposes will come as the logical continuation and promotion of perestroika. The first steps in this direction have been taken, and more are to come; they, without doubt, will give a fresh impetus to reducing the military efforts and budgets of other countries, primarily, the United States, where these problems are put on the agenda by the chronic tremendous budgetary deficits.

I have pointed to the contrast between the old and the new which is increasing the international prestige of both the Soviet Union and its present leaders. Yet one more

contrast has emerged, the one between the apparent achievements of our foreign policy and equally apparent difficulties of economic perestroika within the country. Strange as it may seem, international relations are more amenable to change along the lines of the new thinking than our own economic system, which has taken shape over decades and which is resisting change both objectively and subjectively and appearing to be deaf to the needs of our own people. Paradoxically, abroad, in politically enlightened circles, in any case, perestroika is accepted more straightforwardly and enthusiastically than in our lines for goods in short supply, lines which have become more numerous and longer.

Since our sores are no longer kept secret, this paradox was noticed by realistically-minded analysts in other countries. One of them, US Senator Bill Bradley, Democrat, of New Jersey, has this to say in a comment contributed to *The New York Times:*

"The Soviet Union needs reform to survive. Dazzling diplomacy and innovative foreign policy do little for the folks back home in the bread lines. That is why the new leadership is willing to take real risks... Reform means making tough choices: butter, not weapons, efficiency, not useless output, consumption, not forced saving. The real reformers know this. They also know that it means higher prices, less job security and harder work today in exchange for the promise of a better life tomorrow."

The analysis, although harsh, is primarily correct. It coincides with what many of us are saying. The Senator suggests that the new American President should view perestroika positively, but not "pay for it" with Western credits and subsidies. No, it is not because he opposes this assistance, but because, in his view, the Soviet Union should restructure its economy itself for its own good in

the first place along more rational and effective lines without relying on foreign financial props.

This is, however, already a different topic. What I would like to do here is repeat the main thing: the Soviet Union has essentially secured the external conditions which are vital for engaging in its internal affairs with less diversion—in the economy, in society, in the sphere of political reform. It has been a long time since our reputation abroad was so high. At present, long-term factors are coming into play. The maintenance and further enhancing of this reputation will increasingly depend on domestic progress.

January 1989

Afterthoughts

A great deal has been linked with this man in our consciousness. Politics is personified through leaders. At a time of the predominant role of the two nuclear powers, for eight years Reagan was one of the main participants in and makers of international relations—alongside the Soviet leader, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. The situation was different, however, because this time it was not the General Secretary who outlived the American Presidents one after another as, for instance, Brezhnev outlived Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter. It was the US President, who during his first four-year term had to deal with three Soviet leaders—Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko. These were the most intensive years of the arms race. The conservative President went for it deliberately in a challenge to Moscow. During his second term (which almost coincided—January 1985—with the advent of the new leadership in the USSR) together with Mikhail Gorbachev—through four summits—Ronald Reagan brought about a turn for the better giving cause to hope for a new long stretch of peace, stability and cooperation.

Ronald Reagan's two terms as president included many different events. We, the Americanists, writers on international affairs, wrote various things about him. It is up to history to make the final summary. Meanwhile, in conclu-

sion I would like to say something which I have never said before, namely, that at times we and the Americans display signs of similarity we hardly expected and also differences which we would like to avoid.

I will begin with one recently discovered similarity. On the day of his inauguration, January 20, 1981, Reagan said that America lived beyond its means. It was perhaps the strongest of his reproaches addressed to the Carter Administration. Never before, however, had America lived so recklessly in debt as it had under Reagan. During his presidency the federal debt increased more than two and a half times to approach the astronomical figure of three trillion dollars (approximately 10,000 dollars per capita) and chronic federal budget deficits which fluctuated near the 150 billion mark. Reagan says that the main credit to his policy known as "Reaganomics" goes to tax cuts, the low rate of inflation and the creation of 19 million new jobs. Nevertheless, opinion polls indicate that Americans, who in general speak highly of his presidency, are more dissatisfied than satisfied with the country's economic condition and the administration's policy in this area. In this sense his successor has received rather difficult heritage.

Where, however, is the similarity between them and us? It turns out that we, too, live beyond our means, and this is not the first year at that. This fact was stressed in no uncertain terms by Nikolai Ryzhkov at a televised meeting of the USSR Council of Ministers. We also have a budget deficit, which has until recently been concealed but is now officially acknowledged. It is covered by the rapidly increasing amount of money in circulation not offset by the mass of commodities. The state spends more than it receives. The people earn more than they produce. In the opinion of some of our experts, the USSR's budget deficit accounts for a greater share of the gross national product than that of the USA.

This similarity has at least one common feature, that is the two powers' mammoth military spending. Significantly, the Americans look not without envy at their allies, junior in rank, but very successful in economic competition—Japan, the FRG and other West European countries. And for us it is apparent that our similarity with the Americans in living beyond our means, unfortunately, fails to remove the difference in our standards of living, which is far from being in our favour.

We now take a more sober view of and speak more freely about our own life which discourages us from the desire to criticise the way other people live. Yes, there are many of them, vices of capitalist society. They have not been invented. But one cannot build one's own virtue from somebody else's vices. The higher self-deception would raise us, the more painful it is to land on the soil of realism. The more it hurts to realise that the developed capitalist countries have done a better job of solving a number of historic problems, which had been put before the world by the 1917 Revolution—such as social protection for workers, medical aid and education, wages and pensions—than we have.

But let us return to Reagan and the subject of unexpected similarity and undesirable differences. Ronald Reagan, the conservative, came to the White House thanks to the voters displeased with the liberalism of the 1960s and 1970s which, the way the Americans understand it, means growing federal government intervention in economic and public affairs. He came with the main promise to get the Washington bureaucracy off the nation's back, and although even across the ocean bureaucrats multiply like rabbits and although Reagan far from succeeded in everything, he never tired of declaring his commitment to that credo. In his farewell televised address to the Americans, Reagan, recalling the initial words of the US Constitution,

said: "Ours was the first revolution in the history of mankind that truly reversed the course of government, and with three little words: 'We the people'.

"'We the people' tell the government what to do, it doesn't tell us. 'We the people' are the driver—the government is the car. And we decide where it should go, and by what route and how fast."

Earlier we would have said to this: demagogy. At present one thinks what a paradox it is; isn't there a similarity, an affinity between the credo of that American conservative and the strategy of political reform the Soviet Communists are now pursuing? Let us admit that this affinity grows on the soil of the everlasting idea of democracy, which has meant government by the people since the times of the ancient Greeks, for all the difference in systems, ways and methods. Let us admit that the command and administrative system stemming from Stalin, which he borrowed from the autocracy, no matter what might be claimed, is far from being closer to government by the people than bourgeois democracy, and that it alienates the working man from the fruit of his work no less than capitalist ownership.

There was a time when one of the key premises of Marxism was the dream of the withering away of the state as an instrument of coercion. However, during "building of socialism" under Stalin there occurred a hitherto unseen absolutisation of the state and the entire command and coercion machinery, the unseen alienation of the working people from the structures of power built according to the hierarchic principle and utterly unaccountable to the public. To elevate society and social forces, to open channels for the effective expression and protection of the interests of social groups and to put the state "in its place", within the law, which equally defines not only citizens' duties, but also their rights—are our vital, urgent tasks.

and they can well be expressed by Reagan's image of the people who are the driver and the government which is the car.

One of our profound ideological and practical differences with the Western democracies underlined by Reagan "personally" was in the different approaches to the relations between the state and the individual. They put the individual in first place while we put the state there, the very same command and administrative system which posed in collectivist attire, as it were. Even the well-known slogan "everything for man, everything for the benefit of man", if one gives it some thought, has a paternalist touch of patronage and sponsorship on the part of the state, which, as an omnipotent and all-knowing force, promises to bestow favour on its citizen, standing above him and acting apart from him, apart from his own will. In recent years, gradually destroying Stalinist and Brezhnevite stereotypes, we are coming to realise the sovereignty of the human being.

For this reason we are able to find a common language with the West on an issue we earlier considered an encroachment on our internal affairs—the issue of human rights. The approved final document of the Vienna meeting is the best type of evidence to this, which was also the most difficult to secure. Among other things, the right to emigrate was acknowledged to those who do not want to live in the Soviet Union for a variety of reasons. This provision is now being put into practice. One of President Reagan's last acts was to increase the annual quota of "refugees" from the USSR that the USA was willing to accept, from 18,000 to 25,000. Many of them do "run away"—from oppression and not only from oppression, but also from our life hoping for better luck across the ocean. As a Russian saying goes, fish seek deep water, man seeks happiness. This is his right. But "we the people" will stay on our land,

in our country to remake, to rebuild it. The people have nowhere to run to.

Finally, a few comments on a traditional subject of international politics, that of Soviet-American relations.

Before entering the new, 21st century mankind is going to mark the half-centenary of its coexistence with nuclear weapons. It was peaceful coexistence and cohabitation (after Hiroshima and Nagasaki), although this peace was rather troubled and uncomfortable. Having such a cohabitant, one doesn't have much of a choice—it's either coexistence or non-existence. This comprised the framework of Soviet-American relations in the postwar years.

During Reagan's presidency, especially, his first term in office, there was a dispute as to whether he was an "ideologist" or a pragmatist. The dispute stemmed from his zealously expressed conservatism. The most ardent of his supporters wanted him to be a consistent ideologist, and he satisfied their desires calling the Soviet Union "an empire of evil" and declaring a crusade against communism. However, in the final analysis he turned out to be a pragmatist, as befits the leader of a bourgeois democratic power.

When that dispute emerged in America, in the Soviet Union there was no talk yet of the new thinking or of deideologising international relations as a component of it. At present our approach is clearcut. We also profess pragmatism, although we prefer another, similar term—realism. The pragmatism (or realism) of power and politics, unlike ideological fanaticism, dictates a sober consideration of the interests and possibilities of one's own people and, through that, the interests of other nations. It was this approach which in the long run brought us closer to the Americans despite the pledges of loyalty to the position-of-strength policy that had come from Reagan and are now being made by Bush. As a matter of fact, we

are also talking with them not from a position of weakness. Indeed, more than enough power has been accumulated on both sides. A lack of reason has been acutely felt for a long time. Now, it seems, this shortage is being eliminated, and there is the hope that the most productive principle, the principle of the sufficiency of reason, will fully materialise during the Soviet-American dialogue.

We have new historic vistas in front of us. Without belittling the merits of other nations, I must say, that the thought found by Russians and the rest of Soviet people, through much suffering, has played a role of no small importance in opening them to mankind. Although our people are not as practical as some others, from time to time they know how to endow and illume mankind with an idea of universality. This idea has been fermenting in our consciousness for a long time, as Dostoyevsky testified in his day, but it was the modern world, closely interdependent for better and for worse, with its dilemma "to be or not to be?" that became ripe for it in all earnest.

As for the United States, with its fractional history of the change of government, of four and eight-year presidencies, the situation there also seems to be suitable for taking advantage of these new historic vistas. For the first time in the postwar period the eight-year White House term of one Party, the Republicans, has been complemented with at least another four-year term of the same Party. The new President shares his predecessor's philosophy and, by all accounts, will ensure a high degree of continuity. Furthermore, there is no argument about his views and approaches—he is a pragmatist. The urgent needs of both our and American internal development dictate us to continue to move along the same road.

January 1989

Once Again about the Caribbean Crisis

In the Critical Light of Glasnost

A party of "veterans" of a catastrophic war, which fortunately failed to break out, gathered in one of Moscow's modern mansions in late January 1989. It was officially referred to as the Soviet-American-Cuban symposium on the Caribbean missile crisis of October 1962. It is commonly held that at that time mankind came closer than ever before to the brink of the nuclear abyss. It has never come so close to that brink since it learned the basic lesson of the Caribbean crisis very well.

The two chief protagonists, Nikita Khrushchev and John Kennedy, departed this world long ago. But many others, although now 26 years older, are still very much alive. And thus it was that for the two days, when I attended the symposium, I was able to see and hear at close range the men who had won a place for themselves in the pages of history by their mere involvement in the Caribbean drama. Here are their names and the posts they held at that time: the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Andrei Gromyko, the USSR Ambassador to Washington Anatoli Dobrynin, the USSR Ambassador to Havana A. I. Alexeyev, the US Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, the US special assistant to the President for national security affairs McGeorge Bundy, the President's special counsel Theodore Sorensen, assistant to chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff General W. Smith, to

mention just a few. On the Soviet side as a sign of change was a certain family element introduced into the make-up of the delegation. Nikita Khrushchev was sort of represented by his son Sergei who remembered the time well and also referred to his father's memoirs which incidentally never have been published in the Soviet Union. The late Anastas Mikoyan was also represented, as it were, by his son Sergo, a well-known specialist in Latin American affairs. As for the Cuban delegation, it was headed by Jorge Risquet Valdés, member of the Politbureau of the Communist Party of Cuba. Among its members was the then Chief of the Cuban General Staff Sergio del Valle. Politologists and historians were well represented on both the Soviet and American sides. Among them were Georgi Arbatov, Dmitri Volkogonov, Yevgeni Primakov, G. Kh. Shakhnazarov, and the Harvard professors Joseph Nye and Graham Allison, to name but a few.

It is not my purpose to give a detailed account about how the participants, recharging themselves with former sentiments, reconstructed a dramatic picture of how the crisis came about and how it all ended. I should like, rather, to try to look at the Caribbean story from a new angle, the angle of glasnost and the lessons that must be learned, although this is not necessarily such an easy thing to do. Before beginning, however, let me remind the reader of the main facts.

The Caribbean crisis flared up because Soviet missiles had been delivered to Cuba. The island lies 150 kilometres off the US coast, and the range of the R-12 missiles brought in was 2,000 kilometres. R-14 missiles with a range of 4,000 kilometres were also on their way, but the Soviet ships carrying them were stopped by an American naval blockade of Cuba. Only part of the nuclear warheads for the missiles had been shipped, but according to Soviet

sources, none of them were installed even during the hours when the crisis was at its height.

The idea of deploying missiles in Cuba belonged personally to Nikita Khrushchev. It was endorsed in Moscow in the summer of 1962 following a visit to Havana by a Soviet delegation which included Marshal S. S. Biryuzov, the then chief commander of the strategic rocket forces, posing as "engineer Petrov". The missiles were controlled by Soviet military personnel and their launching against the United States could be effected only in the event of an American attack and only by command from Moscow.

What were the Soviet motives? Well, the defence of Cuba and the strengthening of its defensive capability. The way the Soviet leadership saw things, Cuba was threatened with another invasion after the abortive attempt at Playa Girón in April 1961. And what about the Cuban motives? The Cuban leadership, giving its consent to the deployment of Soviet missiles, proceeded from the need to strengthen the defensive capability not only of its own country, but of the entire socialist camp. It was guided by a sense of solidarity and the common interests which were understood accordingly. The Americans were prepared to use any means, including air strikes and an invasion of Cuba with a force of several divisions, to get rid of the Soviet nuclear missiles that were capable of hitting the greater part of US territory, including not only the South but also the North-East with the capital city of Washington and such major centres as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Dallas, St. Louis, and Atlanta.

Moscow considered the missiles in Cuba to be defensive weapons and a means of at least partially offsetting the strategic imbalance which was heavily tilted in favour of the USA at that time. According to McNamara's data, the USA had 17 times more strategic nuclear warheads than the USSR. The ratio was 5,000 to 300. Washington re-

garded the missiles in Cuba as offensive weapons (although similar American missiles had been deployed in Turkey at that time and were "tolerated" by the Soviet Union). Washington maintained that until the Caribbean crisis it had no intention of invading Cuba.

As it was, the sides failed to understand each other and distrusted one another, and the differences in interpreting the motives and intentions were not overcome 26 years later either.

However, the assessments, if not interpretations, converged on one key point. They could not but converge. The Soviet missiles had been brought to Cuba **secretly.**

It was the secrecy that caused a particularly strong reaction on the Kennedy Administration's part. As one of the American participants told the symposium, the "sharpness of our reaction stemmed, among other things, from the fact that we were deceived, that it was a deliberate and conscious deception." Another delegate pointed out that the American missiles in Turkey had been deployed openly and both the US and world public knew about them.

It was the secrecy of Moscow's action that fuelled the campaign in America, first of all, for the profit of the "hawks", to justify and intensify the image of the enemy who would stop at nothing to defeat the United States, the main obstacle in the way to his historic goal—world Communist domination. It was the Soviet secrecy that largely determined the categorical nature of the American policy in resolving the crisis which manifested itself in establishing a "quarantine" to block the way for Soviet ships and in the demand to dismantle the missiles and take them out immediately. In addition, passions on the American political scene had been running high because just a few days were left to the "mid-term" elections and under such circumstances the US President had to be "ten feet high" in confrontation with another nuclear power.

Meanwhile, Moscow without going into the nuances of American politics, proceeded to act in its usual way, secretly adopting decisions concerning military matters and secretly carrying them out. In other words, Moscow acted in the spirit of the traditional **old thinking**. And it was unlikely that the secret would not be uncovered by American intelligence which was keeping a watchful eye on Cuba, alarmed as it was by the nature of the island's expanding ties with the Soviet Union. But the particular force of the old thinking entrenched in its traditionality lies in the fact that it not always lends itself to a rational explanation. Far from it. It manifests itself in a vacuum where public pressure has been "pumped out" and where authoritarianism breeds arbitrariness.

Judging by the statements of the Soviet participants in the symposium, the Soviet leadership had considered the problem of arms supplies to Cuba thoroughly and in a collective manner. It took several months to choreograph the scheme. In my view, a statement attributed to Khrushchev best of all reflects the essence of that decision, its risky adventurism, or to use a complimentary tone, its "revolutionary romanticism". Khrushchev is said to have remarked that "it was necessary to put a hedgehog into the American's pants." And so this is what they did, and in a typical Russian way they concentrated only on how he with the hedgehog in his pants would suffer from a tickle and horror and, also in a Russian way, did not bother to think that the man might not only get frightened, but also fly into a rage.

The question arises as to how Washington would have acted if Moscow had acted differently, that is, openly. It makes you wonder whether in such a case the cargo could have been delivered to its destination at all and used as a chip in the political bargaining that justified itself in the final analysis. For, after passing through the reefs of the

Caribbean crisis it did become possible to reach the desired agreement, that the USA has observed to this day, the removal of Soviet missiles in exchange for an American commitment that they would not touch Cuba by force of arms. Standing behind these questions, which are impossible to answer with precision, are consolations of the type—"all's well that ends well" and "every cloud has a silver lining". But while we resort to this antedated wisdom we cannot guarantee that the worst was not in store for us on that path to achieving good through bad—a global nuclear conflict.

However, I am going to leave the question of whether such improvisations are permissible in order to get back to my principal subject, our obsession with secrecy and secrets about which, fortunately, we can now both speak and write.

On October 18, 1962 President Kennedy received the USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko in the Oval Office of the White House. In the drawer of his desk the President had photographs taken by American intelligence-gathering aircraft showing that Soviet missiles were deployed on their firing positions. The discussion, and an acute one at that, centred on the German peace settlement and also on Cuba. The President gave assurances that he had no intention of attacking Cuba while the Minister upheld Cuba's right to strengthen her defences. But... But the American President failed to produce the photographic evidence from his desk drawer while the Soviet Minister failed to tell him that, contrary to previous assurances, Soviet nuclear missiles were being brought to Cuba and installed there. Later the hush-up was described as evidence of Moscow's malicious intent. As a way of reply, Gromyko explained both in his memoirs and at the symposium that Kennedy had not asked him about the missiles directly and that was why there was no need for a direct answer.

Gromyko knew about the missiles. But Ambassador Dobrynin (and he reaffirmed that at the symposium) did not. Nor did Soviet diplomats, journalists, and other officials in Washington and New York, although they might have guessed what was going on from American news stories for there is never smoke without fire. It was a well guarded secret, and as was our custom, still guarded from our own people even when others were aware of it. American newspapers featured pictures of Soviet missiles in Cuba while Soviet diplomats were compelled to deny, reject and even expose the "lies" trying to "prove" to the Americans that there were no missiles at all or certainly not in Cuba and that it was all falsification and provocation.

Yes, secrecy not removed even belatedly resulted in much more than simple absurdities. It meant that the Americans no longer trusted our representatives and this in turn inflicted considerable damage on the state. To put oneself above ethics common to all humanity is not only immoral but unprofitable politically.

I was *Izvestia's* correspondent in New York at the time, and as ill luck would have it, was landed in hospital with an attack of acute appendicitis on October 21, on the eve of Kennedy's television address in which he told the nation about the missiles in Cuba and announced a naval "quarantine". Lying on a hospital bed with a portable radio in my hands I listened to direct broadcasts from the Security Council meeting. The aides of Adlai Stevenson, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, brought in and set up billboards with the tell-tale photographs. Adlai Stevenson asked the Soviet representative Valeryan Zorin: "Mr. Ambassador, please tell us if there are any Soviet intermediate- and shorter-range missiles in Cuba, tell us without waiting for the translation, yes or no?" And Zorin's voice was heard in Russian over the radio: "I am not in an American court, Mr. Stevenson."

Later I read the USSR representative's speech in Soviet newspapers as reported by TASS. It said: "V. Zorin exposed allegations fished by US State Department officials out of a heap of garbage about the so-called 'installation of Soviet missile bases' in Cuba." Another TASS report said: "On orders from Stevenson, fake photographs from the US Central Intelligence Agency were put up in the Security Council conference hall. After that the US delegate like a parrot read out explanations fabricated by American intelligence."

Our diplomats had a hard time. It was only on October 25, the fourth day of the main phase of the crisis, that Khrushchev made their plight easier when he mentioned the missiles in a conversation with an American businessman. But even then the word still remained taboo, as it were, because the conversation was reported only in American and not in Soviet newspapers.

However, the peculiar suffering of Soviet diplomats and correspondents was nothing compared with another fact which, although of enormous importance, somehow failed to attract due attention. The point is that **the entire Soviet people were brought to the brink of a nuclear abyss without knowing anything about it.** What is more, the Soviet people did not even know what the actual cause of the crisis was. It was the sombre **triumph of secrecy.**

Objectively, there is every reason to call it the deception of the people or, at any rate, utter disregard for their right to know things which were a matter of life and death to them personally. But in those days such things as rights were actually out of the question. There was not even a sign of glasnost in that respect. It was only after October 28, when the terms of a compromise were at last worked out in an urgent exchange of messages between Khrushchev and Kennedy, that the key word, missiles, started to find its way into the Soviet press, and even that was far

from immediately. It was only after they had stepped back from the brink that our people realised what brink it was they were standing on, and were astounded—after the event.

One might suggest that I am exaggerating. But just leaf through the newspaper files of those days. You will never discover a word that might have served as a clue to the mystery, you will never find a word of admission. The Americans knew it. So did the Cubans. But our people did not. In the newspapers of those days you will find lots of stories about the crisis, pages with ritual banner headlines of this type (literally): Curb the high-handed American aggressors! End the reckless play with fire. Foil the aggressive designs of US imperialism! The nations demand: put an end to the pirates' rampage! Strait-jacket the bandits, defend peace!

And in all that torrent of routine rhetoric there was not a single word about the subject of the crisis.

The newspapers only reflected the tone of official documents and its sharp fluctuations, making it sound more rude and intense. For instance, the Soviet government's statement of October 23 described Washington's actions as "unprecedentedly aggressive". But in the final phase of the crisis Khrushchev's message to President Kennedy of October 28 said: "To calm the American people... the Soviet government, in addition to its earlier instructions on putting a stop to further work at construction sites for the deployment of weapons, has issued a new instruction on dismantling armaments which you describe as offensive, packing them and returning them to the Soviet Union." Note that the message merely refers to "armaments which you describe as offensive".

I do not want to create the impression that Nikita Khrushchev and the then Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee were not concerned about the future of the

country and the people. The speed with which Moscow agreed on the terms of a compromise with Washington proves the contrary. Moscow promised the Americans to take back the missiles in exchange for their commitment not to invade Cuba. The Soviet Union did not even have time to inform Havana about the deal (Anastas Mikoyan was hastily dispatched to Cuba to heal the wound inflicted on Fidel Castro that way).

I should like to underline something else: the way the destiny of the people was decided. It was something still in the order of things at that time. Despite the historic act of abandoning mass reprisals, the Khrushchev decade, just like Brezhnev's times later on, retained the most persistent generic features of the Stalinist state system. In 1962 Khrushchev never stopped to consider whether he and other leaders of those times had the right to risk the fate of their own people for the sake of assistance to another people, the Cubans. He never even confronted such a question. This right as well as other authoritarian rights in the field of foreign policy were taken for granted. This was something that both puzzled and frightened the bourgeois democratic governments in the West, which have no such rights, because they are hobbled by parliaments in their actions.

Incidentally, this difference in the methods (I emphasise that it is in the methods and not in the social nature) of government adds to the distrust in international relations, to say nothing of other factors. It hampers practical cooperation even if there is agreement on the general principles of peaceful coexistence between the two systems. Many such obstacles will be removed when the Soviet Union has a law-governed state. Democracy is a complex notion, it is understood differently in different countries, to say nothing of the systems. Yet any actual and not ostentatious democracy means a policy, both internal and ex-

ternal, pursued by the will of the people. And it means for all the world to see. The actions of a law-governed state are more predictable than those of an authoritarian one, and this alone makes it easier to maintain a dialogue and practise cooperation on the world scene.

It is not our custom to write about how decisions were made "at the very top" in those days and what alternatives were considered. There was no other man in the world to match Andrei Gromyko in his unique experience of half-a-century in dealing with international politics. However, in his memoirs, describing his conversation with Kennedy, Gromyko keeps silent about what he said in his diplomatic reports to Khrushchev from Washington and on returning to Moscow. The symposium also did not do much to break this silence.

It makes you wonder why our statesmen remain traditionally tight-lipped at a time when history itself demands of them the frank sharing of their experience and thus a contribution to removing one of our most acute shortages, the shortage of political culture, which also, incidentally, affects the present-day democratic process. What is it—the same secrecy mania? A vow of silence our leading officials take from generation to generation? Or the passion for concealment, our second nature, institutionalised by Stalin so that he could hold in his hands all elements of power not accountable to the people?

Have any lessons been learned from the Caribbean crisis? In the narrow sense, yes, because we have never sent nuclear missiles across the ocean since then.

As for the lessons in the broader sense of the word, much remains shrouded in mystery as before. In the key area where foreign policy problems touch upon military matters, the public gets access only to general, often declarative documents, but not the vital strategic decisions

determining our military build-up which were adopted in those years and which already have become history.

Fifteen to twenty years after the Caribbean crisis, having learned its lessons, especially after Khrushchev's removal, the Soviet Union made up for its lag in strategic nuclear warheads. Ten years after the Caribbean crisis came the 1972 Soviet-American interim agreement on limiting strategic arms (SALT-I). It registered the rough parity and for five years froze the ceilings on the number of land and submarine-based strategic missiles. Across the ocean the data are included in reference-books accessible to the public at large. In the Soviet Union they were considered secret for a long time. Needless to say, the scope and pace of the military build-up also remained a closely guarded secret. In the mid-1970s the American opponents of detente concluded that the USSR was outpacing the USA and that, consequently, it was necessary to seek superiority and not the maintenance of parity. That conclusion was disputed from our side, but without any facts or figures, and thus sounded unconvincing to our opponents. As a result, their views prevailed in the American military-political establishment and in public consciousness. This is what helped Reagan defeat the "soft" Carter in 1980 and, having become President, push through Congress a mammoth arms programme, which was far from secret. That was America's reply not only to our military build-up, but also to our secrecy.

Another and the most striking example of the reality in which bureaucratic ways get the upper hand of democratic principles is Afghanistan, our nine-year war, which has just ended to the great relief of our people. Let us not discuss here why we found ourselves there and why we stayed there for so long, a question which is now asked openly. Let us consider instead another aspect of the case which only our unusual habit of putting up with anything could

endure. Soviet men fought and were killed in a foreign land in peacetime (for we had not declared war on anyone!), while society, the people, the mothers of those men were even denied the right to ask publicly how many men were fighting there, how many were killed or wounded. Of course, letters on this subject did come to the press and government agencies, but "officially" the people were silent. Not a single question about Afghanistan had been raised in the USSR Supreme Soviet for the entire period. Nor could it have been done. This is something inconceivable to the citizens of the United States, France, Japan, India, and many other countries. Yet, as for ourselves, we could not even conceive of anything different before perestroika and glasnost. The inertia of old thinking and way of life is so strong that it continues to work even at a time of renovation, withering away very slowly because public pressure is insufficient while the leadership may not have time for everything.

Only eight and a half years after the introduction of our troops in Afghanistan, only after the Geneva agreements had been concluded and the first three-month phase of the withdrawal got under way did the Soviet people learn from their mass media that the limited contingent of Soviet troops was about 100,000 strong. Although the foreign mass media mentioned approximately the same figure and also the fact that the "limited contingent" was a pseudonym for the 40th Army.

Only after eight and a half years did the Soviet people learn about the official figures of casualties in Afghanistan. It happened in the press centre of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs intended more for foreign than Soviet correspondents. The date was May 25, 1988 and the briefing was a part of preparations for a Soviet-American summit. Army General A. D. Lizichev, Chief of the Main Political Department of the Soviet Army and Navy, dis-

closed that the number of those killed as of early May 1988 was 13,310; the number of wounded reached 35,478, and a total of 311 were missing. Foreign correspondents gave the news much more prominence than ours. The Soviet newspapers hid the bitter figures in their inner pages, amidst brief accounts of the press conference. There were no headlines and, as far as I know, no comment.

Why such callousness? The reason is the same—there is no law that makes the authorities accountable to the citizens even when the issue concerns that most sacred thing—human life. But I think there is also a more specific reason: the absence of an information mechanism, clear-cut and well thought-out, which operates automatically.

...As you can see, I was diverted from the tripartite symposium on the Caribbean crisis. But that diversion was towards the burning issues of today.

Although belatedly, the time has now come at last to ask inconvenient questions about the past which quite well fit into the present and demand exhaustive, constructive answers in order to move into the future. These answers are given by glasnost asserting itself as a mandatory norm of state and social relations. These answers should be given in the course of political reform, the main purpose of which is to set up democratic structures that make the government accountable to the people and heed their will.

February 1989

Two Augusts

During the days that mark 50 years since the Soviet-German treaty of non-aggression and Hitler's subsequent attack on Poland it would be proper to cast at least two glances on what happened from two Augusts, those of 1939 and 1989. The first is mentioned more frequently in our publications to seek a justification from history, since it is alleged that Stalin had no other choice under those circumstances. One might agree with this. Stalin had no other choice, all the more so because he remained Stalin both before and after August 1939. However, the second glance from August 1989 is more important because, opening almost the entire background of the 20th century, it enables us to make a belated summing-up and to commit it to the trial of history from the height of the traversed path.

Who and what is on trial? Hitler is twice dead, both as a man and as Hitlerism uprooted from the state structures and ideologies of the two German states, the division of which he left behind as the long-term heritage of his twelve (just twelve!) criminal years in power. Chamberlain died long ago, and his policy of appeasing the aggressor became outmoded in his own lifetime. In postwar years when the "cold war" divided the world by its barricades this policy failed to find influential followers in the United States, which became the centre of the Western camp. So, here

too, history passed its verdict. Stalin has also been dead for a long time, but Stalinism proved the most tenacious of the postwar realities, and parting with it appeared to be the most protracted process of all.

Indeed, the march of history is a bit too slow, and yet to complain about it means to blame ourselves for the slow rate at which we are making progress. The trial of the Stalinist and neo-Stalinist models of socialism is still taking place in August 1989 in a stormy and dramatic form. And it is taking place not at the "round tables" of historians investigating the troubled days of August 1939. In Poland the economic crisis and the dynamics of political pluralism gained more and more momentum and led to the formation of the first government in postwar years headed by a non-Communist, a Catholic, one of the leaders of Solidarity. In the Soviet Baltic republics the protest against the Stalin-Hitler secret deal and the events of the summer of 1940 assumed a mass scale, stimulating demands for not only economic, but also political independence and even secession from the Soviet Union. It is history and the mass of the people that administer their justice from the height of the past half a century and not the "special conferences" of Stalin's times, and such radical manifestations of this justice have become possible thanks to democracy emerging in our country for the first time, to the increasing radicality of perestroika. I don't think its initiators foresaw that its progress would be so swift and wide-ranging.

If we look back on that August of fifty years ago, we can see clearly from our time that the Second World War was inevitable. No matter how the cards were stacked in the diplomatic patience played by the four powers, Britain, France, Germany and the USSR, the central fact, the nature of the Nazi state, could not be changed. The Nazi obsession with the idea of world domination stemmed from the theory of German racial supremacy and was

already fed with the blood of the first victims, the first successes that invigorated the victorious aggressive spirit of Europe's most powerful war machine. In Nazi Germany the suicidal pathology of the pretender to world domination got the upper hand over the instinct of self-preservation intrinsic both in "normal" states and in normal people. Incidentally, in today's nuclear age, it is this original instinct of self-preservation (also called common sense) that lies behind the appeals for morality in world politics: the only way to survive is to take into account the interests of other countries, that is, to be able to put oneself in their place, that is, to behave morally.

Before the Second World War an anti-Hitler coalition was impossible because the ideologically irreconcilable states (the USSR, on the one hand, and Britain and France, on the other) hoped to survive at each other's expense. They sought not so much to stop German aggression as to turn it in the other direction. And in one way or another the two sides played into the aggressor's hands, enabling him to use the "divide-and-rule" principle, to divide and act with impunity. It was only when the Fuehrer declared war both on the bourgeois democratic world and the Stalinist Soviet Union that the instinct of self-preservation snapped into action and it became possible "to put both a horse and a timid doe" into the same harness. When Hitler was brought down and the problem of self-preservation was thus solved for each member of the anti-Hitler coalition, the wartime alliance could not but collapse due to its heterogeneity. The "cold war" was as inevitable as the Second World War. Why? It was not because there were aggressive designs on either side of the "iron curtain". The point is that there could have been no stable peaceful coexistence between the bourgeois democracies led by the Messianic United States and totalitarianism of the Stalinist type which maintained repressive re-

gimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and was still not averse to the idea of world revolution, although it had no sufficient "material back-up" for such a venture. Stable coexistence is becoming possible only thanks to the democratic restructuring in our foreign policy which came to be called the new political thinking.

Let us, however, get back to the trial of history. Even in the time of glasnost it is still difficult to speak outloud about certain simple, but fundamental things. There were two totalitarian states before the war, Germany and the USSR, and the two dictators placed two different ideologies at the service of their personal power, although Hitler sought to strengthen it by improving the life of "the master race" while Stalin did the same by bleeding his country and army white with savage reprisals. As a result of the war one totalitarian regime (in the shape of National Socialism) was crushed and destroyed while the other scored a victory and began to glorify "the greatest military leader of all times and nations". It won and became stronger. And it is still our custom not to speak about this aspect of the great popular victory. To this day we still refuse to draw a clear-cut demarcation line between the two aspects of the victory, the price paid by the people in the cruel and bloody war for their homeland, and the way the fruits of that victory were used by the leader and the anti-popular, undemocratic system we now call the command-and-administrative one, which was created by his "genius".

Our casualties almost equalled the losses incurred by the rest of the nations involved in the Second World War and, if counted properly (something which has not been done to this day), may even exceed them. And that river of human blood was, as it were, written off by another river of blood shed by Stalin and his henchmen in the years of hunger and mass reprisals organised by the authorities. The victors, after all, are not put on trial.

And what did the people get from their victory? What did they get if we are to judge by the "end result" of the entire postwar period? The life we now live, the life in a country which is a superpower in its military might and third-rate in its living standards. Plus a philosophy of self-sacrifice—anything to avoid a war!—we are getting rid of only now when we take a broader and more open look at the world around us which is not so threatening after all. Yes, it is both a triumph and a tragedy. The triumph of four-year selfless heroism and the tragedy of forty years without democracy. That was how the fruits of the victory were used by the Stalinist "socialist" system later inherited by Khrushchev and Brezhnev. It long outlasted its founder who was anathematised post-humously and later almost reinstated to his glory. Furthermore, the Stalinist model of socialism was also extended to Eastern Europe where Moscow's tough patronage was established. The latter enabled our opponents—and not only them—to speak of the last empire on Earth, the Soviet empire. Well, if it is an empire, it is very different from the traditional ones because its parent country is worse off than the "outlying provinces". And the worst off is the nucleus of this strange "empire", hinterland, midland Russia, which has more or less lost its historical name to be called instead the Central Non-Black Soil Zone in a purely utilitarian fashion.

These are the thoughts that occur to you when you look back on the two Augusts and on the stormy events accompanying this anniversary. When history or the will of the people are violated, you will have to pay the bill for violence sooner or later, and the later the bill is presented, the more you pay. It seems as if the Russian poet Tyutchev was writing about the post-Stalinist decades when he said: "Soaked in blood from head to foot we fight the dead risen for a new funeral." And the bill has to be paid not by those who committed violence (for they rise only for a new

funeral), but the new generations who are blamed without being guilty. There is no guilt on those in the Baltic republics who suddenly found themselves in the position of "migrants" being ousted by the indigenous population. Nor is there any guilt on those who look like nationalists in the eyes of the "migrants", but who in fact only want to preserve their historical roots and national identity. The root causes of inter-ethnic tension are low living standards and the growing shortage of food and consumer goods. Coupled with a look at the Scandinavian countries, these factors make people ask themselves "what did we get after all?" and add fuel to the separatist tendencies.

The myths and falsifications that still survive should be replaced with actual true-to-life history. And the sooner, the better. The events show that even prestigious commissions cannot be allowed a delay in making their conclusions. However, an honest look back on history seeing the injustices of the past (including the entry of the three Baltic republics into the USSR) is not a surgical knife cutting off an entire half a century. Only fools or dyed-in-the-wool extremists believe that one can enter the same stream twice by returning Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to the allegedly carefree pre-war past. And it would be proper here to speak of those guilty. Those who make haste, who incite people to extreme acts, who sow the seeds of hatred instead of patience and mutual understanding are guilty all the same, whether they do it voluntarily or not. What they are doing is extremist, and extremes meet. Those who advocate an immediate separation and secession from the USSR are playing into the hands of those pressing for tough measures, including military action, to curb the separatist designs.

Of course, convincing people in a democratic way is more difficult than banging on the table with one's fist. But the democratic way is the essence of perestroika, the main

lesson learned from the times of Stalin's cult, Khrushchev's arbitrariness, and Brezhnev's stagnation. Of course, perestroika is vulnerable to criticism, but it did open ample opportunities for a patient dialogue and a search for harmony. We must admit, however, that much time has been lost and passions are running high, one of the causes being a belated reaction from the centre. As the vast experience of the past few years shows, the latter is often late coming up with a sober-minded assessment of the fundamentally new situation in inter-ethnic relations.

From August 1989 we see clearly, as if spread before our eyes, August 1939, July 1941, May 1945, and many other memorable dates. Yesterday looks much clearer than tomorrow, which we could see on more than one occasion on our way to "the radiant future" and "the shining heights". What is going to happen in a year, in two or five years? Ours is a time of historic changes and upheavals, a time of answering for the past, a time of choosing a new road. What is demanded of society and its leaders is self-control coupled with resolve, wise circumspection and the courage to follow this road which, while holding no promise of a carefree life, is the only correct one. After all, we have had many occasions to see where the other road can lead.

August 1989

History Itself on the Agenda

On the Way to Malta's Shores

No matter how interesting Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Italy might be, news analysts have already turned their eyes beyond it, towards the coming weekend, the shores of romantic Malta where a Soviet-American summit, although unofficial, but the first one of this kind and, undoubtedly, very important in the present international situation is to take place. Shortly after the summit had been announced I already made the comment that the swiftness of changes was dictating its pace to the two world leaders and making them hold a meeting ahead of schedule, six months before the official, prearranged summit. Since then events have been moving ahead even faster, and even those analysts who are fond of prophesying admit with uncharacteristic simplicity: Who could have thought that?... Who could have imagined that?...

Indeed, who could have imagined that the Berlin Wall which stood for 28 years as the embodiment of the "iron curtain", a metaphor coined by Churchill, would suddenly, by a decision of the new leadership of the German Democratic Republic, become not a demarcation line, but a meeting place for West and East Berliners. Where a handful of dare-devils used to pull off their escapes to West Berlin at the risk of their lives, hundreds of thousands of people now cross the opened border without any hindrance, and nearly all of them come back home, confirming

the axiom the totalitarian regimes reject and the democratic ones make the basis of their existence: when people have freedom of movement across the border, the vast majority of them stay home, especially if they are given the opportunity—at home—to freely remake and improve their life. The opening of the Wall was inconceivable to the GDR old leadership, but to the new one it became necessary because there was no other way to stabilise the political situation in the country, not counting the unacceptable alternative of using violence against its own people.

The Wall turned into gates flung wide open is the same symbol of change in Eastern Europe as the discussion open to the whole world at the first Congress of People's Deputies was a symbol of the resolute drive for perestroika in the USSR. The change of leadership in Bulgaria and mass manifestations denouncing Todor Zhivkov... The expression of the people's will in Czechoslovakia and the collective resignation of the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party which stayed in power on the dubious mandate of August 1968... And it all happened within less than three weeks in November 1989, a month extremely rich in turning points which were historic without any exaggeration. They prove that perestroika in the USSR had triggered off a chain reaction of breaking down command-and-administrative systems in other socialist countries, too, where, like in the Soviet Union, the Stalinist and neo-Stalinist (Brezhnevite) models of socialism, which failed to justify themselves from the point of view of the people's needs and interests, are no less difficult to get rid of.

What is taking place without any pressure from Moscow but, undoubtedly, under the impact of the Soviet example, is a kind of synchronisation of social processes. And their main common denominator is a movement

towards democracy and political pluralism. What could be seen earlier was the synchronisation of stagnation. Indeed, the changes were long overdue. It would not be a bad idea to strike the two decades of Brezhnev's rule off the annals of history, but the latter, alas, will not allow such arithmetic.

On the other hand, the more belated the changes are, the more terrific their speed—they are taking place these days, before our very eyes. In the opinion of many analysts, there has not been anything to match the year 1989 since 1945. And it would be strange if the leaders of the two nuclear powers playing the dominant roles in the two main military-political alliances dividing both Europe and the rest of the world did not meet this year. History would not forgive them. All the more so because at this sharp turn wisdom, self-control and a sense of balance are more needed than ever before.

When I was talking with a well-informed fellow-journalist in Washington a short while ago, I heard the following: Even a minimum of substance would have been "forgiven" to the Malta summit before the abolition of the Wall, the meeting could have been confined to a "mere" exchange of opinions; however, the scale of the new changes compels the American side actively to search for some practical results not to disappoint the public with its sharply increased attention and expectations. But what results? The American journalist ruled out any bilateral declaration which might be interpreted in the world, particularly in Europe, as a claim to a kind of American-Soviet domination in the area. Both sides would take pains to avoid that. The American journalist remarked that new proposals on arms control would be a possibility. Later, however, President Bush publicly explained that there would be no breakthrough on these issues, and that it would be better to postpone detailed negotiations on the

subject till the official Soviet-American summit due approximately in the middle of the coming year.

The Americans had clearly intensified preparations for the meeting, but as I heard from a Soviet diplomat in Washington, they kept their cards close to their chests, without revealing them. There were only hints. If we take the regional conflicts, judging by the hints Washington intends to insist that the "winds of change" blowing over Eastern Europe should also extend to Cuba and Nicaragua. Moscow has every right to point out that American persistence in aiding "the irreconcilable" hampers the search for a political settlement in Afghanistan on the basis of national reconciliation and, in fact, guarantees the continuing bloodshed from which innocent people are the first to suffer.

Evidently, the problem of economic cooperation will be touched upon in one way or another. Unless expanded quickly and resolutely, the official American statements regarding practical assistance to the reforms in the USSR will look increasingly like nothing but hot air. This is also the view of a number of American liberal-minded analysts whom I happened to meet in Washington and New York. The active and, naturally, more constructive, attitude of the USA is urgently needed and will be duly appreciated in the light of the grave situation on the Soviet consumer goods market, especially as far as food supply is concerned.

Let us, however, return to the rapid changes in Eastern Europe which, following Poland and Hungary, came to the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. I was staying in the USA when the Wall collapsed politically, and I saw what a big event and, of course, a sensation it was for the American establishment—and American television. The leading commentators from all the main TV corporations in the USA, posing against the graffiti-covered Wall, which

looked like a work of pop art, and Brandenburg Gate, staged a kind of week-long festival of freedom. It must be said that the President, the Secretary of State and other high-ranking officials expressed their satisfaction with discretion, suppressed their emotions, and did not yield to the appeals to choke with delight over the "collapse of socialism" in yet another, strategically important country. Neither Washington nor official Bonn and other West European capitals for that matter shared the emotional rapture over the allegedly available prerequisites for the immediate reunification of Germany "on the basis" of West Germany. On the contrary, official comments stressed the need, although in a somewhat muffled, but rather definite manner, to retain the existence of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, even if in a changed form, as a guarantee of a durable peace in Europe at this sharp turn in history.

However, the American anti-Communists holding no official posts did not conceal, among other feelings, their sense of delight where the Soviet Union was concerned. On the one hand, they praised Moscow for its calm and well-wishing attitude to what was happening, for its commitment—now being tested in practice—to the principle of freedom of choice for all nations and renunciation of any intervention, in particular an armed one, in the internal affairs of other countries, including those to whom it is allied. On the other hand, the collapse of the Wall was presented as a triumph for the long-standing American policy of firmness and strength, the resolute refusal of seven presidents (starting from John Kennedy) to put up with its existence. Even when curtsies are made to Soviet policy, the dramatic turn of events is presented as the West's historic victory over the East, of the USA over the USSR. The well-known conservative analyst George Will, describing the construction of the Wall as the most striking

recognition of the moral bankruptcy of communism, now observes that its downfall has become a symbol of the failure of communism.

Our glasnost once again is stumbling over the analysis of the breath-taking events in Eastern Europe. But if we are to overcome yet another barrier of timidity and temporary numbness, we shall have to admit that George Will is right if "the failure of communism" is understood as the failure of its Stalinist model which, alas, until recently, has been the only one that existed for far too long a time.

Indeed, Moscow both recognised and supported the existence of "the Berlin Wall", sharing the views of the GDR leadership that the closed or strictly controlled border enshrined one of the vital realities in postwar Europe, the existence of the two German states, and prevented the depletion of the GDR. Indeed, none of the Soviet leaders (unlike the American presidents) called for pulling down the Wall or for the free movement of East Berliners to West Berlin until it had become the official policy of the new GDR leadership. And we must admit that such a stand failed to pass the test of time and, as it turned out, the further things went, the less support it had among the GDR population. In this sense it would be fair to regard the latest events as the failure of the long-running attempt to create a German state of the working people behind the Wall which would be more prosperous than the Western one.

Of course, Mikhail Gorbachev will meet George Bush and not George Will on board the two cruisers, and the tone of the American side will be different. But if Germany's moment of truth hovers over the table in one way or another, it would be proper to specify what sort of Soviet Union and what type of "communism" is meant. For what sort of Soviet Union, the old one or the one that is being renovated, is the collapse of the Berlin Wall a

defeat, and for what type of Soviet Union is it a virtual victory or, at any rate, the inevitable advent of new trends, the East German echo of our perestroika? History, among other things, is a history of doctrines and theories brought into life and either accepted or rejected by its course. In the final analysis, the best criterion against which the path of development may be checked as being correct or leading only to deadlock is the people's living standards, the reasonable organisation of their life and work, maximum opportunities for revealing their potentialities (that is, freedom, restricted by law only to prevent encroachments on the freedom of others). No matter how strictly scientific some doctrines or theories might seem, they are nothing but good intentions until they pass the test of practice. And it has been known for a long time where the road paved with good intentions can lead if the worst comes to the worst. What is most important in this case is turning off the road as early as possible—better late than never. And when you do turn off it, it is not so much a defeat as the finding of a more correct path, even if that path is neither smooth nor short.

While wondering at seeing Moscow retaining the initiative in East-West relations under the present difficult circumstances, commentators sometimes refer to it as the art of making a virtue of necessity. Yet there is no need to oppose things that are quite compatible in this case. Poverty is not a shame, and necessity does not rule out a virtue. Especially when Moscow enlightens the West, teaching it the way to adopt a broader, humane approach, and when the scepticism of the new American President is dispelled. He says now that America wants President Gorbachev's reforms known under the name of perestroika to succeed ... so that the Soviet Union together with the United States could go beyond the "policy of deterrence"—towards new partnership.

After all, George Bush rather aptly formulated one of the objectives of the Malta meeting when he said that the United States would seek assurances from President Gorbachev that this process of reform in Eastern Europe would continue. And the US, for its part, would assure him that America welcomed the reforms not as a rival seeking an advantage, but as a nation offering support.

If the words of the support offered become deeds, Malta will help bring to life the dialectical correlation between victory and defeat expressed by the poet thus: "I was defeated by them all, and yet it is only therein that my victory lies." He wrote this long before politicians in his country had begun talking about a new, integral and interconnected world.

November 1989

Man at the Rostrum

Now that all of us are for perestroika when speaking from the rostrum, and including those who are against it (when not at the rostrum), it would not be such a bad idea every now and then to divert our attention from current disputes in order to stop and remember who it actually was who championed perestroika back even in the years of hideous stagnation that masqueraded under the guise of developed socialism. Non-conformist heroes of this ilk numbered very few. The best known of all was Academician Andrei Sakharov, who spoke from the world rostrum, a thing dangerous in those days, because he was barred from the rostrum at home, which was occupied by other speakers.

And following those only too recent days during the first half of the 1980s, we should also recall those episodes, fresh in the memory, when at the Congress of People's Deputies the majority condemned this courageous man who was championing perestroika even in pre-perestroika times more often and willingly than others. Under a veil of seriousness, history conceals, among other things, a devilish irony and loves to express it in the clash of personalities. Thus it showed us the initiator of the condemnation in the person of an Afghan war veteran, now a Komsomol city leader, who would now be standing at the rostrum on his own two feet instead of artificial limbs, if the Soviet leaders at that time had heeded the words of the disgraced rebellious Academician and withdrawn the troops from Afghanistan.

Sakharov, naturally, had laid himself dangerously "open" to condemnation when he contributed an unauthorized story to a Canadian newspaper alleging that Soviet command had ordered the killing of surrounded troops in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the moujaheddin. He "exposed" himself because he was accustomed to getting information from unofficial sources and did not trust official ones, very often for good reason. But did the veteran realize that he had chosen as a target for his patriotic indignation a unique figure who had protested against the Afghan adventure from the very beginning and more resolutely than anybody else and who had paid for it by harsh reprisals against him, exile in Gorky, and the cutting off of all ties with the rest of the world? This is to say nothing of the Soviet public from whom Sakharov had been completely isolated even before that—for what? Today to address the reasons directly, it must be admitted that it was for championing perestroika in the years of stagnation, for commitment to the new political thinking at a time when confrontational thinking ruled in official circles and when today's thesis of the predominance of principles common to all mankind was extremely unusual—but not for Sakharov. It is a familiar pattern—a person "gets into a scrape" for refusing to give up views that are ahead of his time. And this pattern, although in other forms, will remain if the person continues to be ahead of his time.

An eyewitness described the episode with the Afghan veteran and Sakharov, and the majority's reaction at it as an attempt at a moral lynching. The episode has already attracted enough attention. However, I should like to single out this aspect in particular: Did the veteran know who Sakharov was? Did those deputies, of the rank and file, so to speak, who backed the veteran, know? Or had some people forgotten to do away with the image of an

enemy, the image of an enemy henchman, once conjured up by methods of disinformation and hushing-up, even by the time when Sakharov had been elected a People's Deputy?

Clearly, the explanation lies not only in ignorance of the facts. It would seem that it lies also in a distorted notion of patriotism, in that psychology of sycophancy and inner servility which, as a principle, rejects the righteousness of one who has been persecuted as a state criminal, expecting of him only obedience and gratitude to the authorities who have pardoned him, released him from exile and even brought him closer to their retinue. However, "the ungrateful", refusing to demonstrate humbleness, continued to cherish the right of independent judgement as most sacred, and gave his "benefactor" only "conditional support" when the latter was elected to the post of President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Sakharov's case was testing the new attitude of the authorities to an individual asserting his independence, the new relations between official ideology and "dissent". It was a test by political practice, not by declarations. As a People's Deputy, he was already a part of the new political structure. However, he was, as a rule, still barred from the main press organs of this structure on account of his views. Abroad, the People's Deputy continued to receive a warmer welcome than at home. And immediately after the Congress, Sakharov went (it has become easier now) to the Netherlands and Britain to receive the gowns of an honorary doctor of law at various universities, including Oxford, where he was acclaimed as "the greatest champion of human rights". There he repeated the same things he had said at the Congress and what he had not been able to say to the end—with frankness and independence. Here is an excerpt from his speech at the Institute of International

Relations in London: "It is not yet clear whither we are going to move. It would be a mistake to think that we have already embarked on the right track. It does exist, but the direction of our further movement will depend on how events are going to unfold in the next few months or, perhaps, years. Under these circumstances I appeal to the West to display extreme caution in its relations with the Soviet Union because what now looks like assistance may in fact prove to be a way of driving the disease deeper inside and avoiding the necessary political changes."

How should one treat these assessments and advice which, in view of the speaker's name and influence in the West, might affect Soviet chances of getting credits there? What I am interested in is the methods rather than the substance of the attitude to the opposition, something which, in a broader sense, is no less important than the substance. Whether one agrees with him or not, one has to reckon with the fact that there exists the independent opinion of a man known throughout the world and his real political weight.

Let me put the question in a broader context. Why after all do we need political pluralism? Do we need it in order that, having proved its existence and having convinced or coerced the dissenting minority in the next round of the spiral, we can secure the unanimity we are so accustomed to? This option is something we will always bear in mind, even if not always consciously. This was evident from the behaviour of not only the majority at the Congress, but also of its Presidium, which controlled the majority and allowed the minority to speak out only, it seemed, in order to show that there was both openness and glasnost, and yet not to correct or, perhaps, even change its pre-arranged position. If that is so, we are dealing here either with a failure to understand the essence of democracy or with playing at democracy.

Or do we need pluralism, including an organised variation, at every turn, forever, like a motive force that has been existing in all parliamentary democracies from the beginning of time as the most effective way of the more precise choice of the direction and pace of the movement and finding the truth in the interests of various social groups, of the entire people? Pluralism exists for practical purposes, not for exhibition performances for the eyes of the country's population and the rest of the world.

Sakharov presumed that the Congress did not take seriously enough either him or the Decree on Power proposed by him and some others. This fact, among a series of others, led him to believe that the results of our democratic process have so far been limited. And he made his own conclusions. Having been abroad and discovered an attentive prestigious audience and voiced his doubts and warnings about the progress of perestroika outloud, he resorted to the means of political struggle accessible to him. By the old standards it was unpatriotic—speaking of "our own" sore spots before "foreigners" and washing out dirty linen in public.

But Sakharov was invulnerable to such accusations. More than twenty years earlier he had overcome Russia's widespread misconception that the truth and the monopoly on interpreting patriotism was the property of the authorities, and he proved that he was right where the most important aspects of this phenomenon are concerned. Time—and the course of Soviet society's development—passed a judgement in his favour, rejecting the line of those who had kept him down.

As I am a writer on international affairs it is in a way easier for me than for others to see and single out features common to all mankind in Sakharov's fate and views. The most important aspects of his activities remind me of another Nobel Peace Prize winner, the American Dr.

Martin Luther King. Of course, the countries and the systems are different. While Martin Luther King powerfully resonated on the American scene leading millions of black and white fellow-countrymen, Sakharov's voice in the old days failed to reach the Soviet citizens from the "mute interior" (as he once put it) of our society, while a handful of human rights champions who shared his views languished in prison camps and special mental hospitals. However, the Soviet physicist fought for the rights of man with the same courage with which the American Baptist pastor battled for the civil rights of black Americans. One opposed the war against Vietnam, the other the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. And, of course, both were distinguished by genuinely humanistic aspirations which perhaps were even more characteristic of the maker of the Soviet hydrogen bomb than of the American pastor. Dr. King was assassinated in that stormy, difficult year of 1968, when the 46-year-old nuclear physicist, under the influence of the "Prague spring", made his debut on the social scene, interrupting his seemingly successful career.

Back then, without losing time, I wrote a book on Dr. King, but those two names came side by side in my thinking only a short while ago. We writers on international affairs were not accustomed to taking interest in our own country's prophets and it was only recently that I read actually for the first time (once I had scanned it in English without paying much attention to it) the first work which saw the beginning of Sakharov's crucifixion—"Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence, and Intellectual Feeedom". It was dated June 1968.

Already at that time Sakharov was suggesting a blueprint for reforms in our country, and it is remarkable in how many respects it coincided with the present-day official programme of perestroika. Take, for instance, the Law on the Press and Information, "the aim of which is not only to

abolish irresponsible ideological censorship, but also in every way to encourage self-study in our society and a spirit of fearless discussion and the search for the truth." His proposals in those days contained no such notion as pluralism, but the essence of the phenomenon was conveyed by the ardent appeals for freedom—for opinion, for discussion, and for conscience. One of the key words was glasnost or openness. Human rights were one of the cornerstones, and as years went by, the emphasis on it was enhanced because the machine for the suppression of dissent crushed those rights more and more, and in Sakharov's view, which was quite justified, they became the groundwork both for the internal democratic development of the USSR and for its international reputation, which also meant the groundwork for the reliability of peaceful coexistence with the West. It was also then, in 1968, that he proposed "carrying through the exposure of Stalinism to the end, to the complete truth and restricting the influence of neo-Stalinists in every possible way."

Sakharov did not claim the authorship of those ideas. They were in the air and shared by many enlightened Soviet people. He based his ideas on the views of such humanists as Albert Schweitzer and Linus Pauling. His basic premises were, first, "the division of mankind threatens it with disaster" and, second, "human society needs intellectual freedom". The new thinking was present not as a term, but as the keynote of the author's reasoning: "In the face of danger any action increasing the division of mankind, any preaching of the incompatibility of world ideologies and nations is madness and a crime. It is only international cooperation... that meets the interests of the survival of civilisation."

Naturally, such thinking was not in keeping with access to top secret military research. As the result the author was barred from such work. His "reflections" were not able to

reach the Soviet press, but they were willingly published in the West, and for nearly twenty years he could reach his fellow-countrymen only in such a roundabout—and dangerous—way. That ostracising, that long forced isolation from his own society and fellow-countrymen, the forced reliance on the West and its mass media determined Sakharov's way of life and his mode of social survival and, evidently, could not but affect his subsequent behaviour.

Incidentally, where can we read Sakharov's first and subsequent essays known to the whole world? Only in foreign publications in English, French, Italian, Spanish, and other main world languages, including Russian. And this in the era of glasnost, despite the fact that the essays are ideologically "acceptable" by today's standards, and more than that, are quite in the spirit of perestroika. However, it seems that the label of sedition pinned up on Sakharov by the censors of the Brezhnev regime has still not been removed to this day. This is one of the reasons and, perhaps, the chief one, for that crying ignorance and lack of understanding I mentioned earlier. Meanwhile, the reading of both the early and later Sakharov, and the evolution of his views offer much food for thought. This is an historical reading for it helps us understand our modern history. It is fair to say that Sakharov's life and fate were historic. For history chooses men out of the ordinary in order to show through their fate and drama the passage of time and its own progress, as it were. Indeed, in a sense, Andrei Sakharov was the only man among our contemporaries, who had such a rendezvous with history.

Here is just a very concise account written by an onlooker. The '50s and '60s was an heroic period when the young brilliant scientist practically rocketed to the summit of fame, to the Olympus of the chosen and invested with power (an academician, three times Hero of Socialist Labour) thanks to his contribution to the country's thermo-

nuclear power. And there, almost parallel, began the period of first doubts and the start of the struggle when he was alarmed by the political leaders' intoxication with that power and the excessive nuclear tests in the atmosphere, which led, he knew, to thousands upon thousands of nameless victims. The humanist got the upper hand of the physicist, and he confided his "seditious" reflections to paper. From a favourite of fortune he became an oppositionist, a dissident experiencing the full impact of a different kind of power of his own state, the power of the total suppression of dissent. Then came the long stagnation of the '70s, the frequent "tally-hoes" supported by many of his former colleagues, the change of images and even awards, the debunking of three times Hero of Socialist Labour whose decorations were taken away from him, and the difficult birth of a Nobel Peace Prize winner not recognised in his own country.

I don't know whether the academician who was ahead of his time could foresee that the whole country would catch up with him one day, but he continued to live in accord with his own conscience and social and moral duties. The most emphatic act of protest against the introduction of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, the exile to Gorky, a city closed to foreigners, in order finally to deny him any communication with the outside world, the long train of oppressive days and episodes, including force-feeding on a hospital bed so that the Nobel Prize winner, who resorted to an extreme method of defending his own and his wife's dignity, did not die a hungry death.

Such is Sakharov, seen in very brief outline from a side-view against the background of Stalin's last years and, later, Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's times in the context of the history of our crisis and his life and those shifts in social consciousness, which were invisible for some time, but which in the long run, after the replacement of three

General Secretaries in three years and a change of generations at the helm did bring about an attempt at restructuring. And come to think of it, there is no more expressive symbol of perestroika than Sakharov standing in line to speak from the rostrum, and Sakharov at the rostrum, an exiled man just three years ago without any rights, and now a People's Deputy. And no longer a solitary voice crying in the wilderness.

In early March 1971 Sakharov sent a memorandum to Leonid Brezhnev expressing a desire to meet in order to discuss problems which are now the key issues of our current reforms: glasnost, the building of a law-governed state, defence of human rights, the abolition of privileges for the officialdom, other principles for choosing leading personnel, an end to "elections with no choice", economic reform, relations with constituent republics, disarmament, including consent to inspection (a double crime in those days) on national territory. He was vouchsafed no reply.

And then he sat in the same hall with men invested by the Constitution with supreme power in the country, and Mikhail Gorbachev seven times (he counted it himself) gave the floor to yesterday's dissident. But what was that? "Noise in the hall", the shorthand record says impassively, much more impassively than the TV screen with scenes still fresh in the memory. The record registered "noise in the hall" five times during a ten-minute statement. And towards the end the dispassionate report says three times: "Sakharov A. D. /not heard/". He was not heard because the mike had been switched off. This was also a historic moment. Let us hope to God that it will not be filled with prophetic meaning after a passage of time. There are many speakers, as usual, and as usual, there is little time. But all the same we should have listened to one, unique speaker, and taken heed of what he said.

June 1989

The Turbulent Finish of the Year That Heralded the Advent of a New Era

In its last December days, the turbulent year 1989 keeping to its pace and vigour of change came to a stormy finish—in Romania. The dictatorship of Nicolae Ceauşescu was doomed by the very thing it had preserved until now—its cruel violence against the people. The Romanians rebelled in Timisoara—they were shot at from submachine guns, they were crushed by tanks that spared neither adults nor children. The victims were hidden in the hastily dug mass graves. But the Romanians rose in revolt once again. And not only because people had reached such a collective, desperate and self-denying state when they shake off fear of death through no longer being able to put up with humiliation and slavery. They did so also because the banners of democracy were inspiringly flying nearby—in Bulgaria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. The main factor was, however, that the "big brother" and senior ally, the Soviet Union, itself had changed, and was setting a totally different example now, an example whereby the authoritarian bureaucratic system that used to pass itself off as socialism and paradise for the working people was being dismantled.

The Romanians rose in revolt also in their capital Bucharest. The most fearless shouted their protest in the same square at the very same moment the ugly dictator branded the popular actions in Timisoara as "the coordi-

nated action of various spy services and imperialist circles seeking to destroy the integrity and sovereignty of Romania, put a stop to socialist construction, and again subject the Romanian people to foreign oppression." What familiar phraseology! It had been heard both before and during the Moscow trials of the 1930s and of course later.

The last appearance of "the titan of the titans" before the people, the last ovation to the "conductor" (leader) suddenly interrupted by shouts of protest, the last lie only a day before the arrest, four days before the execution which occurred on Christmas day. The dictator's watchdogs allegedly safeguarding state security, shooting back, still succeeded in mowing down thousands upon thousands of people, and the rebellion would have been doomed if the army had not gone over to the rebels' side.

The events were sudden, but their nature was only logical. In that year of peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe the authoritarian regime in Romania was destined to be the last to fall for it was particularly cruel, and its downfall could not but be accompanied by a great deal of bloodshed and the emergence of the present vacuum of power. There could have been no elementary organised alternative political structures under Ceauşescu, and the National Salvation Front itself, as its Chairman Ion Iliescu explained, was not the organiser of the movement, it was the offspring of the movement. Here Romania differed from her neighbours where the authoritarian regimes were more liberal, where sprouts of opposition did exist in one form or another and where, for this reason, the transition to other, multiparty power structures seems to be more orderly.

The Ceauşescu dictatorship constituted the maximum approximation to classical Stalinism possible in the Europe of the late 1980s by its experiments that ruined both the country and its citizens, the system of terror and resolve to

use force in order to preserve its power. A Communist tyrant. Socialist despotism... His wife, Elena Ceauşescu, was his right-hand helper, a member of the Political Executive Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, First Deputy Prime Minister, and President of the Academy of Sciences. His son, Nicu, was commonly known as the prince. An entirely new experiment in history was being prepared: the establishment of a socialist (or a communist?) hereditary monarchy. How do you like that? Did Europe say good-bye to absolute monarchs two centuries ago only to return to them in a new turn of the historical spiral? Could the founders of communism have envisaged such a thing? Alas, human nature manifests itself both in the lofty and in the base. Who, if not ourselves, should know that no matter how noble an original ideal might be, in the absence of democracy it becomes just a cover and a justification for totalitarian power. It is democracy alone that constitutes the insurance against a dictatorship.

Our joy for another nation which rid itself of a personal power regime is depreciated in one way because earlier we were prepared to keep silent about this nation's tragedy. The change of words and epithets with regard to Romania occurred suddenly and aroused totally justified criticism of our journalists on the part of the public. It is not the first time that the problem has arisen, but a solution to it is still to be found. Although it is very simple. Official representatives of the state should act and speak within the framework of diplomatic politesse. As for journalists, public organisations and People's Deputies they should have greater freedom where the choice of expressions and descriptions is concerned. It seemed that they could have got access to the mass media earlier to tell the truth about the Ceauşescu regime and the suffering of the Romanian people. But they did not—and again we must note that

here our glasnost is inadequate, for its boundaries are still determined by the official considerations of the top echelons of power and not by the need and the right of society to know the truth—and in good time at that.

The turbulent finish of the year in Romania also provides food for other thought. Take, for instance, the favourite question of the influential domestic conservatives: Whither are we going? They ask the question alarmed by the declining prestige of their high posts and using as argumentation the sorry plight of the economy and the consumer goods market, the growing shortages of everything.

As it happens the question is not irrelevant. While man shall not live by bread alone, you cannot live by glasnost and democracy alone either. To make matters worse, at times there is no soap to wash oneself with. So whither, indeed, are we going? The mechanism of parliamentary democracy, new to us and thrown into high gear, is combined with the deepening of the economic crisis, creating the general impression of a disintegration. This impression, for its part, becomes a dangerous material force adding to the panic now caused by hectic demand.

Romania, now saying good-bye to the totalitarian regime before our very eyes, does not provide an answer to our question, of course. But she makes us somehow refresh our memory by answering another question, which is also very important: What are we leaving? What did we say or, to be more exact, are saying good-bye to? The "meeting" lasted for decades, so the parting cannot be short.

Some people ask critical questions regarding the road to the future, about where we are going, while all they wish for is to return to the stagnating past, which, however, only looked outwardly stable. In fact, the past without democracy led us into the blind alley of low living standards and a high level of confrontation with the Western world,

although it is being shown that we can get along with this world very well, reducing military spending without weakening our security. Some might say Ceauşescu was no match for Stalin or Brezhnev. Some might say that Romania is in no position to teach us. While this is true, it is only in the sense that our impasse proved longer and deeper, one for which Romania was no match. Furthermore, it is much harder to get out of such an impasse when the country covers one-sixth of the world's land surface.

The outgoing year was remarkable because, in a way, history speeded up its course, solving problems long delayed and releasing the pent-up energy of nations. The political make-up of four East European countries has changed beyond recognition over the past two months. And in our country a genuine leap forward has been made over that long year in the citizens' political consciousness. What appeared as extraordinary in the spring looked quite natural by winter. For instance, just recall the March election passions in Moscow when the City Party Committee helped a candidate obtain nearly 90 per cent of the votes by attacking him with its full force, thus causing voters to rally around him. Events moved and continue to move ahead of the courage and depth of their analysis. This occurred not then in March, when a number of Party functionaries lost elections, but later on, when it was stated from official rostrums that the Party was lagging behind perestroika in society. And so at the Second Congress of the People's Deputies we saw members of the Party Politburo not in the box, but in the stalls, among the simple and not so simple mortals. Their gigantic portraits are no longer being hang out in the main squares before the main public holidays. They have joined the people. For the first time we hear public criticism of the General Secretary in his own lifetime as an inevitable component of democracy of which he was the initiator. For the first time

there were strikes. For the first time there was the blockade of one republic by another. For the first time the Party organisation of a republic declared itself independent of the CPSU. And the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee interrupted its work considering it necessary for a group of its participants, Party leaders, to go to the scene of action. This was also for the first time and something extraordinary. This is what constitutes a departure from the old which was viewed as unshakeably eternal. These are the features of democracy; this is its unusual price.

What a year packed with events and phenomena showing in the events! One of the highlights was the unexpected working summit meeting in Malta. It once again pointed to one of the major developments in international relations—the constructive development of Soviet-American relations. The new US President, not confining himself to the role of being Ronald Reagan's successor, expressed his readiness to go further in his contacts with Mikhail Gorbachev both in reducing the level of military confrontation and in economic cooperation. Although a storm raged off Malta's coast, the political barometer pointed fair. The meeting signified a farewell to the storms of the "cold war".

Among the events are some which do not strike the eye, but nevertheless point to the path of further progress. By far the first page of glasnost in the military field was opened in late January. The Defence Ministers' Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries published hitherto top secret data about the alliance's armed forces and armaments in Europe and the adjacent water areas.

This date, January 30, will not be found in the canonical lists of the milestones of the year, but it was on that day that the new principles of our relations with the USA, NATO, and the West were confirmed with documents. The year also opened further pages of the top secret military book. We learned about the total strength of the Soviet

Armed Forces and the total of our military spending, that is, data traditionally kept open by those states where the military activity are accountable to parliaments. We are learning such accountability, but we are still too slow—our new parliament is perhaps especially timid in international and military affairs. But things are moving ahead nevertheless.

Andrei Sakharov was booed at the First Congress of People's Deputies while the subject of our military presence in Afghanistan was still interpreted in the light of it having been an international duty, a concept false from the very beginning. At the Second Congress the introduction of Soviet troops was described as deserving both moral and political condemnation, but the first man who publicly said so as far back as ten years ago had already departed this life.

February 15, 1989 will be remembered as a date when the pullout of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was completed strictly in accordance with the Geneva agreements. The blood of our sons is no longer shed on Afghan soil. Our guilt before the Soviet soldiers both fallen and taken prisoner is deeply imprinted in our social consciousness, but there is still no sense of guilt and responsibility for what our country did to Afghanistan and the Afghans. When Yuri Karyakin, one of the top-notch connoisseurs of Dostoyevsky, reminded the Congress of People's Deputies that Russia not only suffered world pain, but also brought on world pain, not everybody understood what he meant.

He insisted that we should carry through our purification to the end and "at least for a second" recall the hundreds of thousands of Afghans who were killed, their mothers and widows. Significantly, the shorthand report which came to our newspaper from the Secretariat of the Congress and was published in our newspaper contained a very characteristic misprint confirming our callousness to

other people's grief. The Afghans, that is the people of Afghanistan, were turned into "Afghan war veterans", that is, our soldiers who went to fight in a foreign land. Did we banish the original meaning of the word "Afghan" from our language? Did we put our own compassion in quotes? Did our own troubles and pains—and they are great, there is no denying it—blunt our ability to feel for other people's troubles and pains?

When one sees a play of emotions passed off as genuine patriotism and expressing themselves in the appeals to suppress national sentiments in the Baltic republics (even if they might have a nationalistic shade) little short of the use of armed forces, one cannot help thinking why we, the Russians, a great nation, are so deaf to the manifestations of the national spirit of other peoples. Don't we see that it is only a broad-minded approach, wisdom and understanding on Moscow's part that, in the framework of a new democratic federation, can help do away with that original sin which the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians believe consists in their countries joining the Soviet Union on the basis of a secret protocol attached to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact?

It is now both usual and fashionable to speak of abandoning the old stereotypes. It has become almost hackneyed. But it is much easier to destroy the stereotypes of phraseology than the stereotypes of reality. Not only the usual words, but also the usual realities can be transient even if they were imprinted in the mind as the only possible ones. Since Stalin's times such have been the stereotypes of our relations with the European socialist countries. They were maintained along the Party and government lines, with the Communist Parties alone staying in power, within the framework of the command-and-administrative system which extended the principles of bureaucratic centralism to

interstate relations. Of course, Moscow was the centre in that system of interstate centralism.

However, nothing under the sun is eternal. 1989 proved to be a year of discarding the past at a breathtaking speed. The Communists lost their monopoly on power. One of the leaders of the recent opposition Solidarity became Poland's Prime Minister, in Hungary Imre Nagy was reburied in a state funeral while the mass action in the autumn of 1956 was described as a popular rebellion. In Berlin there came the political collapse of the wall erected in 1961 as a symbol of the irreconcilable division between East and West. In Czechoslovakia the opponents of the "Prague spring" of 1968 were removed from power, while in Bulgaria the man that had led the country for more than thirty years was expelled from the Communist Party. And to round off the year with a stormy finish there was the execution of Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu in Romania.

To say that it is stereotypes alone would be insufficient perhaps. Foundations is a term more exact and justified in this case. The collapse of the foundations is like the collapse of the usual world. And it alarms not only the Stalinists. The question is why the foundations survived all the preceding decades and collapsed in six out of the seven members of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in the same year. Yes, the command-and-administrative systems did prove their inefficiency in the economic field by failing to secure the material well-being of the people and in the ideological field by failing to provide cultural benefits and political freedom. Yes, the senior ally gave an example, as has already been mentioned, above all by the speedy process of democratisation and the openness of its newborn parliamentarism.

I think, however, that there is a more concrete and tougher explanation and one that brings us back to Afghanistan. This latest military intervention on the part

of the Soviet Union in the internal affairs of another country proved that it was counterproductive more vividly than was the case with Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. The perestroika-minded Soviet leadership, while going for the Geneva agreements, learned the historic lesson of Afghanistan. The withdrawal of Soviet troops from one country was, in fact, a signal that they would never enter any other country. A repetition would be in crying contradiction to the principle of freedom of choice for the countries and peoples declared by the new political thinking as well as to the entire mainline of perestroika concentrating efforts on solving internal problems and providing favourable conditions on the world scene for carrying out this strategic task.

However, no matter how much Moscow might talk of its commitment to the new approaches, the world was waiting for practical proofs. And they did come, one after another. They manifested themselves in Moscow's attitude towards "emergency" situations and radical changes, the transition to a multiparty system in Poland and Hungary and then, since November, in other countries, too. "The Brezhnev Doctrine" as the West called the precedent of the armed suppression of "the Prague spring" departed this life indeed. The principle of freedom of choice asserted itself in practice time and again. Incidentally, it was reaffirmed at the latest meeting between leaders of the Warsaw Treaty countries in Bucharest last July, attended, would you believe, by Honecker, Zhivkov, Jakeš and Ceauşescu. When the time of critical tests arrived, some of them (Honecker and Jakeš, for instance) felt the old urge to use force against the participants in the mass protest actions in their countries. They very nearly did, but changed their mind when received no sympathy from the Soviet side. Ceauşescu was the only one not to hesitate and the score proved to be not in his favour, to put it mildly.

So it was the turbulent finish of a turbulent year that heralded the advent of a new era. And the latter will not be long in making itself known in the Soviet Union's relations with its changed allies and in the relations between the two military-political alliances, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO. Evidently, their structures of confrontation are going to relax to make room for the structures of cooperation. The same is true of the attitudes of the Europeans and Americans to the problem of Germany's reunification. The interest to that problem has sharply increased after the political elimination of the Berlin Wall. The outgoing year is handing over to the coming year many problems, and these are linked not so much with the destruction of the outmoded realities as with attempts to create new stability in a changed world.

December 1989

The Requirements of Common Sense

Stanislav Kondrashov (b. 1928), a graduate of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, is a political analyst with the newspaper *Izvestia*. His specialities are Soviet-American relations and life in the United States, where he spent many years as an *Izvestia* correspondent. Stanislav Kondrashov has written numerous books, essays, feature-stories, and articles, including, to mention just a few, *Martin Luther King, A Long Look at America* and *People Across the Ocean*.

Novosti Press Agency Publishing House